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ABSTRACT

These Action Papers of seven committees of The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) Youth Assembly represent the efforts of young people, who have been given the opportunity to voice their personal opinions on issues permanently on the international agenda. The Committee on Education and Employment analyzes improving quality of education; economic challenges; value of education; problems of women in society; innovative thinking and talent realization; experience and mechanisms for approaching the labor market; and social problems. The Committee on Sustainable Development and Agenda 21 focuses on informal and formal education through media, product labelling, and nongovernmental organizations and on pros and cons of economic incentives for promotion of sustainable development through youth involvement in the economy. It sets out practical steps for youth empowerment in issues of sustainable development. The Committee on Health and Social Development of Youth looks at education for prevention of HIV; helping African youth infected with HIV/AIDS through education; social exclusion of disabled young people; and education for social development of youth. The Committee on Globalization explores youth opinion on the task of reconciling rapid economic expansion with the specific interests of less economically developed countries. The Committee on Peace and Security in the Middle East attempts to find peaceful and feasible means to create peace and security in the region by primarily focusing on building trust between the two parties with the final objective of co-existence and establishment of an independent and recognized Palestinian State. The Committee on Disarmament and Defense proposes the implementation of a solution based on partial disarmament of nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional weapons through confidence-building measures and multilateral weapons reductions. The Committee on Cultural Diversity and Tolerance focuses on these issues: exclusion, religion, minorities, indigenous peoples, gender,

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HIV/AIDS, media, and, most importantly, education. (YLB)

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THIMUN

Youth Assembly

THE VOICE OF THIMUN YOUTH

ACTION PAPERS OF THE SECOND ANNUAL SESSION

27 January - 1 February 2002

Nederlands Congres Centrum &

Deutsche Internationale Schule Den Haag

The Hague, The Netherlands

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The Voice of THIMUN Youth

Action Papers from the
Second Annual Session
THIMUN *Youth Assembly*
27 January - 1 February 2002

THIMUN
Youth Assembly
The Hague International Model United Nations

Editors' Note:
The opinions expressed in this book are those of the participants in this year's session and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the THIMUN Foundation.
Since the participants come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds, we have not attempted to achieve consistency in orthography. Both American and British standard spelling has been accepted.

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Action Papers from the
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THIMUN *YOUTH ASSEMBLY* 2002

President:	Sven Mickisch
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FOREWORD

In January 1998, Gillian Martin Sorensen, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, addressing the THIMUN General Assembly at the 30th Anniversary Session, inspired and encouraged the delegates with the following words:

> *"because you in this room are blessed with intelligence, and education, and youth, and energy, and idealism and vision, you have, more than most, both the obligation and the opportunity to do more. You have the opportunity to work through politics and through education to bring others along: (...) to mobilize your classmates, and your colleagues, and your families, as part of this great peaceful army to achieve the goals of the United Nations. This is the challenge of the 21st century."*

THIMUN took up this challenge.

The THIMUN Annual Conference had been in existence for three decades, developing and growing until it had become an institution demanding the respect of diplomats, statesmen and the leaders of civil society. Further progress towards THIMUN becoming an authentic voice of international youth has been made in recent years through the creation of the THIMUN Youth Assembly.

In 1999, a THIMUN youth delegation of 50 young people, representing 15 different nationalities, took an active role in the Hague Appeal for Peace conference. In the year 2000, a THIMUN youth delegation helped to coordinate and produce Vision and Action plans at the Second World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference. The THIMUN Youth Assembly was created in order to provide such youth delegations with vision and action plans on a variety of issues, which would form the basis for the participation of youth in other important international conferences.

The first two session of the THIMUN Youth Assembly were held in January 2001 and January 2002 in the Netherlands Congress Centre and in the Deutsche Internationale Schule Den Haag, simultaneously with the main THIMUN conference. The Youth Assembly participants, coming from many nations and representing their own personal opinion, focussed on such themes as Education and Employment, Sustainable Development, Peace and Justice, Health and Social Development of Youth, Globalisation, and on Cultural Diversity and Tolerance. Thus they laid the foundations for the policy and practice of future THIMUN youth delegations to international conferences.

The THIMUN Foundation, as an accredited NGO with the United Nations, was now able to send youth delegations to South Africa to attend the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001 and, in 2002, to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Youth Employment Summit. The Action Papers produced by the first two sessions of the Youth Assembly became the basis for the policy statements of the delegations.

Therefore, as the United Nations pleads for greater commitment and cooperation, not only from member states but also from non-governmental organisations and civil society in general, THIMUN is playing its part by stimulating and educating the youth of the world to take on the burdens of leadership.

We sincerely hope that the Action Papers contained in this "Voice of THIMUN Youth" will be read and taken seriously, not only by future THIMUN youth delegations, but by politicians and diplomats, so that the opportunity THIMUN has given to young people to make a difference and to change the world for the better will not be wasted.

David L. Williams
THIMUN Board of Directors

INTRODUCTION

The Voice of THIMUN Youth, Part II: THIMUN's 'new way'

The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) has evolved greatly in the last few years. From starting with the participation of an international youth delegation at the Hague Appeal for Peace, to sending a young delegation to the World Conference against Racism 2001, to now having secured access and a voice at a major policy-making venue, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, a Non-Governmental Organisation of THIMUN's (relatively small) size can feel legitimately proud of what it has achieved.

However, as David L. Williams, Chairman of the THIMUN Board of Directors, has repeatedly said: 'Now is not the time to rest on our laurels'. THIMUN must work hard to sustain its successes, and look into ways to reform internally, in order to improve its performance in existing fields of activity and expand into new areas of interest. The goal of expansion of the organisation's horizons into the vibrant field of Youth Empowerment, thus trying to give the young people of the world a voice in policy-making processes at international, national and regional level, is now being pursued through the establishment of the THIMUN Youth Network (TYN) and the deliberations of the THIMUN Youth Assembly. This Report of the 'Voice of THIMUN Youth' represents the efforts of young people, who through the THIMUN foundation have been given the opportunity to voice their personal opinions on issues permanently on the international agenda.

I think this is exciting and important for good reasons. Firstly, the Action Papers of the seven committees of the THIMUN Youth Assembly are interesting, thought-provoking and deserve, in my opinion, to be taken seriously. This year, they were handed directly by the President of the Youth Assembly to Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the Closing Ceremonies of the THIMUN conference: a great honor and inspiration for all THIMUN Youth Assembly participants.

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Secondly, the hard work of the delegates of the THIMUN Youth Assembly exemplifies what concerted action of a dedicated group in society can achieve. Open minds have discussed and written, then struck out and re-written, and finally agreed upon common positions and actions through compromise and consensus. Not only is this a valuable educational exercise, it also helps create cross-border friendships and helps eliminate prejudice, racism, and intolerance among the future generations of the world.

Thirdly, it will have an impact on THIMUN's policy at international conferences such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Youth Employment Summit. The Action Papers in this „Report form the basis, the core, of what international youth delegations will present to the international community.

While hoping for positive results and reactions to this 'new way', which THIMUN is taking, I wish the reader just as much enjoyment reading the Action Papers, as we have had when debating and writing them.

Sven Mickisch
President
THIMUN Youth Assembly 2002

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SEPTEMBER 2002
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As preparation for the THIMUN Youth Delegation to the
Youth Employment Summit
Alexandria, Egypt
7 - 11 September 2002

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ACTION PAPER

CHALLENGES AND RELATIONSHIPS IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

In this Action Paper, we, the participants of the second Annual Session of the THIMUN Youth Assembly from the Committee on Education and Employment, propose to analyze relevant problems and possible solutions relating to the education and employment of youth. Our personal views represent possible actions to be taken by all sectors in our global society.

This Action Paper acknowledges Action Paper 2001 and builds upon its valuable points to develop more specific steps to alleviate the existing problems of education and employment. By discussing the problems in our committee, we are able to propose actions that stem from our diverse experiences, differing backgrounds, and local realities.

To achieve our goal, we have stated the selected problems, investigated their causes, researched past successful practices, and focused on definite steps that can be taken by individuals or groups.

We believe that a commitment to small actions, whether by an individual or groups, can develop into larger, more significant actions that will improve the education and employment of youth and lead to a more optimistic future.

2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Education has a vital effect on the development of human beings as individuals. People are educated from childhood and continue to learn and develop as the years go by. One of the most important aspects of education is that it allows people to prepare for their future careers. This fact shows us that education and employment are deeply connected to each other. With a lower level of employment, the economic growth of countries worldwide will be diminished. Advances in the educational system are the best solution to prevent this crisis. Receiving education is crucial for the level of employment in society and, during the process of education for employment, the public may struggle with several obstacles. For this reason, we have to thoroughly examine all of the educational, social, economic, and employment aspects of the problem.

3. ISSUES IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

3.a. Improving the Quality of Education

The quality of education often fails to fully prepare youth for employment. Many youth often lack relevant employment skills and millions are illiterate. There is often a great disparity in educational systems between developing and developed nations, and even within developed nations themselves. The quality of education in terms of content may be meaningless to people's future as both employees and employers. Often the lack of vital resources, such as books and adequately trained teachers, is an obstacle. We must emphasize the importance of adequate training and supplies to increase meaningful education and literacy. Specific actions to be taken include promoting the value and donation of old textbooks by visiting private schools to talk about the importance of the books and to try to encourage the donation of books to public schools. Another step would be to encourage teachers from different regions to share experiences and skills through the use of the Internet. Trying to create an interaction between educators from different institutions to promote diverse teaching methods is recommended. Governments and organizations should be encouraged to improve their educational systems or provide funding, material and resources to those schools with inadequate resources. Encouraging literacy, through flexible informal classes as well as traditional schools, for youth who cannot attend school is also important.

Another reason for the malfunction of the education system is the fact that curricula are often outdated or irrelevant to the reality of current employment. Another possible solution is to promote better interaction between the labor market and educational institutions, in order to facilitate the transition from education to employment. Specific actions that can be taken include encouraging the creation of workshops to train and update teachers about the market's needs. Teachers could shadow a professional so that they can be constantly updated about what skills are particularly in demand and to provide real examples to students. Partnerships between higher education institutions and companies should also be encouraged, to allow students to experience real world situations through innovative, interactive projects. For example, one university in Brazil runs a project with companies where students produce annual papers using their new economic skills and then make a presentation to both teachers and professionals. Students can give presentations about what they have been learning to established professionals in companies to receive feedback.

3.b. Economic Challenges

A different set of problems are those rooted in economic discrepancy. Three billion people live on less than USD 2 per day, one in five have no access to running water, and 80% of the world's population have never used a telephone. These are shocking figures that merely hint at the grave, increasing economic discrepancy that exists between different sectors of the world's population and raises more and more problems for the education and employment of youth. The digital divide is growing larger each and every day, cutting off and excluding large sectors of society from valuable knowledge and information. Lack of access to financial resources is greatly hindering young people around the world from gaining economic independence. Inadequate economic independence leads to disenfranchisement among youth. Half-educated, impoverished youth without a stake in their future will inevitably lead to the breakdown of society in the long run.

We consider the lack of adequate resources in the formal and informal (i.e. support for extra-curricular activities) education system, the insufficient focus placed on technology in education of youth, and the lack of support for entrepreneurs, as major failures in the economic environment of today. These need to be addressed if youth are to succeed in obtaining productive and sustainable employment.

Utilizing the possibilities that lie within the emerging markets, new information communication technologies, and youth entrepreneurship, will create new and innovative ways to alleviate poverty, enhance the education system and generate employment. To achieve this, governments around the world need to first re-evaluate their fiscal policies. In today's world, government budgets focus less on constructive, preventative measures like education and employment and subsequently spend a disproportionate amount on sectors such as defense. Allocating further funds towards the research, development and implementation of innovative education systems and the production and distribution of educational resources will have a greater overall positive impact on youth. The active role that individuals need to take is to lobby political parties, elected representatives and governments. They have the responsibility to act as the agents of change in this process, by exerting the political pressure needed in order to make the governments act.

A global 'Tobin Tax' to fund both micro-finance for young entrepreneurs and to arrange for the smooth exchange of knowledge and technology from North to South and from

South to North should be established.[1] It could be very easily facilitated by the six or seven major financial centers of the world, i.e. New York, London, Frankfurt am Main, Tokyo, etc. The financial centers will be responsible for the collection of this tax, while the Global Environment Facility (GEF)[2] could be the organization responsible for its investment in microfinance schemes and technology transfer programs that include renewable energy and especially educational advancement. This would be a way to tackle all three of the previously stated problematic areas.

The private sector should also be involved in gaining resources for education. Partnerships between schools and industries and, even more importantly, between universities and industry would lead to mutual gain. The company would supply the school with equipment such as computers and short internships. In return they would get an educated workforce who would have the capabilities that they are looking for. Ties between potential employers and employees would be made early on. An example of how this could work would be an agreement whereby the company supplies the school with computers and in return the school will advertise the company.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) especially need to take an active role in supplying the human resources often lacking in terms of teaching personnel (on all levels, from the high school teacher to the IT expert that teaches basic computer skills). They should raise awareness and promote volunteer work. NGOs also need to administer this volunteer work and install systems whereby the volunteer will eventually no longer be needed, because he has transferred his knowledge to someone who can take his role. However, as in all areas, this responsibility should not rest solely with the government and the NGOs. The private sector needs to take an active part and must realize its social responsibility. Great results can be achieved if the public and private sector work together. An example of a successful partnership would be the Cisco Networking Academy program, which began in October 1997. It is based on a 280-hour online curriculum, teaching students to design, build and maintain computer networks. The targeted populations are universities, secondary schools, and vocational education schools. In the year 2000, the program was operating in 70 countries worldwide with 50% of the

[1] A 'Tobin Tax' is a small tax placed on international monetary transactions around the world.
[2] See http://www.undp.org/gef/

participants stemming from developing countries. By mid-2000 there were 85,000 students involved.[3] This program uses the new information technology to transfer skills that will empower youth to gain more employment opportunities.

To support young entrepreneurs it would be necessary to advocate the development and use of network databases (as the Youth Employment Summit (YES)[4] has done) that collect the know-how on how to start a business, the success stories of other young entrepreneurs, and provide an interactive way of communicating with other entrepreneurs who can give personal guidance. Another good example of this is the World Bank's Global Development Gateway,[5] launched in June 2000, that hopes to help "everyone in the development file to share information and knowledge, easily communicate, and build communities". The service aims to include online training modules, research findings, best practices and ideas, case studies, procurement services, information on development projects, funding, commercial opportunities, product reviews, news, jobs, and directories, with an emphasis on tailoring the services to the needs of specific audiences by June 2003. This would not only foster more entrepreneurial activity, but also create a network between the different enterprises, having an overall positive economic effect. This is an action that should be taken by NGOs and the government, in close contact with the private sector. They should support the establishment of these networks. Furthermore, they should sponsor awareness campaigns that make youth aware of the possibility of using this database and the profits one will derive from its use.

There is also the issue of gaining financial funding for young and entrepreneurs. In this case the responsibility lies within the private sector and, more precisely, with the banks of the respective countries. Granting microcredits is crucial. Although these credit programs exist, youth get only a very small portion of the granted microcredits. This is due to the fact that many times the requirements set by the bank are impossible to meet by adolescents (i.e. minimum age, possession of an ongoing business). Furthermore, the criteria that the banks favor, even if they aren't an official requirement (e.g. unmarried women and ongoing businesses), leave youth in a disadvantaged position. What needs to

[3] Curtain, Richard (Melbourne, August 2000), Concept Paper: "Identifying the Basis for a Youth Employment Strategy Aimed at Transition and Developing Economies"
[4] See http://www.youthemploymentsummit.org/
[5] See http://www.worldbank.org/gateway/

be done is the creation of microcredit programs that are specifically designed to suit youth and that place greater emphasis on granting loans to start-ups. An administration for these credits would have to be set up that would have to be efficient and have great managerial skills. Because this would be very costly, governments would have to make the subsidizing of these programs part of their youth employment strategy. Without proper administration, these programs would only lead to a higher level of frustration because the negative effects could negate the advantages.

On the whole, governments need to take a closer look at the problem of youth employment and need to realize the great potential that lies within youth. Youth are much more willing to take risks that promote progress in the labor market. Often the fact that governments are unaware of the specific problems faced by youth leads to a destructive employment policy that can bear no fruit.

3.c. The Value of Education

In some communities, particularly in rural areas where agriculture remains the main source of employment, people do not recognize the value of basic primary education and its implications to sustainable development. This creates an even bigger social problem within the community. It is generally hard to convince poorly educated people of the benefits of education. On the other hand, people who have found easier ways to earn money illegally also may not be completely interested in educating themselves. Perhaps the prospect of well-paid employment would encourage people to seek further qualifications. Employers seek qualified candidates and education increases a person's chances of being appointed to the desired position.

A suggested solution is to find alternative ways to educate people, both adults and youth. This could be accomplished in schools or in community settings by volunteer organizations with the support and subsidy of governments. It should be made clear to people that educational opportunities exist for everyone, regardless of age, gender, or socio-economic status. Governments should endorse these programs and find sponsors to provide scholarships to those in need, for example by providing low-income families with monthly stipends so that they can afford to send their children to school. This would provide a good incentive to keep children in schools and continue their education. Upon

completion of vocational training or a higher degree at the university level, people would be better prepared to meet the requirements for desired job opportunities.

A different aspect would be the value of educating young entrepreneurs in how to start and develop their own businesses. An example of good practice for youth empowerment, entrepreneurship and education to foster better employment opportunities is the *Centre for Education and Enterprise Development* in South Africa.[6] The focus of this program is to impart business skills for improving the access to work and to create self-employment opportunities by training youth from disadvantaged communities. Some other organizations with similar aims are the *Making Cents Entrepreneurship and the Microenterprise Training Capacity Building for Youth and Adults*, based in the USA,[7] and the *Skill Formation and Development Training Program in Carpet Weaving and Finishing*, in Rajasthan, India.[8] The value of education should also be reflected within the family, since parents should serve as an example. For example, parents should be encouraged to pay more frequent visits to schools to meet with teachers, in order to become more familiar with the system and aware of the opportunities available to educated people.

3.d. Problems of Women in Society

Discrimination against women (especially in rural areas) in different cultural settings is also a problem. In some parts of the world women are discriminated against due to deeply imbedded cultural values and these women are often not encouraged to be educated or employed to the same extent as men. Discrimination against women in education is often due to the cultural or religious conditions within a country or society. There is no clear solution. However, steps may be taken towards improving the chances of women being able to participate equally in the education system as well as the labor market. While it is difficult to alter a culture, steps can still be made towards solving the problem of discrimination. One solution is to create an educational setting to eliminate discrimination

[6] The organization has 20 years of experience and has valuable lessons learned in due course. It engages its own students in its operation bringing in the student experiences to enrich the administration and curriculum of the program. So far 55% success rate is claimed despite having to face many problems.

[7] This is a capacity strengthening program for those who are involved with micro-entrepreneurial development. Its strength is its adaptability, being implemented in 14 different countries both for urban and rural areas and with literate and illiterate clientele. Training evaluation was found to be good with 82% of the participants feeling more prepared to start the self-employment training.

[8] A good example of partnership between the state and the private exporters to create employment opportunities to the youth imparting necessary skills.

against both men and women. This could be accomplished by improving the school entry system to allow more girls and young women to have access to education. For example, parents should be aware of the value of education so that they can provide a good example for their children and help them eventually to be competitive in the labor market. This process of empowering women should be coordinated through governments, mass media, and within communities, especially in rural areas where the problem is often more severe. This would raise awareness and convince young women of their opportunities. The importance of diversity can also be addressed in companies and organizations to raise this awareness and, at the same time, governments can encourage employers to provide equal quotas of positions for men and women, in return for specific types of tax relief. Achieving a diverse work environment would be a good prerequisite for achieving progress against discrimination. By implementing such a system (according to the social and cultural characteristics of each country or region), a long-term solution to the problem will be initiated that can be developed further in the future. The *UN System Action for Youth*[9] also focuses on this problem and suggests actions in an attempt to define the problem and come up with solutions. Another relevant and interesting publication is *Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs*[10]*: Realising the Benefits of Globalism and the Knowledge-based Economy*[11], presented at the OECD[12] Conference in November 2000. It examines innovation and job creation and promotes the importance of adapting to profound changes in the way small enterprises do business, both locally and at the global level, to encourage women business owners and to educate women entrepreneurs.

3.e. Innovative Thinking and Talent Realization

Current educational systems limit self-expression and full participation of youth and often do not encourage students to realize their aspirations or future career goals. Conservative methods are currently in place that don't stimulate students. A possible solution is to adapt current teaching methods to current situation/needs.

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[9] See "The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond", http://www.un.org/events/youth98/backinfo/ywpa2000.htm
[10] Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME)
[11] See http://www.oecd.org/EN/document/0,,EN-document-37-1-no-20-2148-37,00.html
[12] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris, France

More specific actions that may have an effect would be:

- educators should frequently research and implement new teaching methods,
- students should be asked for feedback regarding the teaching methods they find most beneficial,
- supporting youth groups and including innovative and interactive activities that encourage youth to develop skills related to their own interests and give them a voice.

Suggested activities, such as role-playing theatre groups that discuss social issues (see the Theatre of the Oppressed), or student government activities are encouraged, as well as support for youth-oriented art activities that are related to discussions on current issues and problems. For example, painting exhibitions, computer related activities, and photography exhibitions[13] are recommended. Fostering youth groups to encourage community involvement, social concern, and a sense of identity using sports is another step towards making progress. For example, Mathare Youth Sports Association[14], in Nairobi, Kenya is advancing towards this practice. This youth-organized group began to promote environmental activities and sports such as soccer to target male youth who live in a slum area of Nairobi. They then included sports activities for young women and education on HIV/AIDS prevention and reproductive health. With over 10,000 members, this group has achieved immense success in encouraging school attendance and reducing teen pregnancies. These activities can also develop skills that will direct youth to a more suitable potential career.

Another fault of the current educational system is that it does not address the apathy of youth. This apathy is related to current events, social issues, and even their own futures. This may be due to a lack of encouragement, knowledge, or the distress caused by daily difficulties, such as poverty, abuse, etc. A possible solution would be to develop activities and policies that foster engagement of youth and develop valuable skills, such as leadership and initiative, to be used in their future employed lives. Specific actions suggested are: to facilitate informal groups to raise awareness about discussion topics, to

[13] See Organization ImageMagica in http://www.imagemagica.com.br/
[14] Curtain, Richard, (Melbourne, August 2000), Concept Paper: "Identifying the Basis for a Youth Employment Strategy Aimed at Transition and Developing Economies", p19

research good practices on the topics discussed, to gather concerned people together to talk about one issue raised in the research, and to publicize the issue discussed in order to show their own involvement and spread their concern.

These youth groups should propose projects either to implement on their own or with the help of local education authorities. Youth should be encouraged to take an active stance in influencing their own educational system. Finally, creating forums for youth groups from different regions to discuss and exchange ideas and experiences, either using conferences or virtual meetings, is important.[15] Another aspect of the problem is that certain educational policies may discriminate against groups. Entrance examination systems often create unnecessary competition and discourage university attendance.

3.f. Experience and Mechanisms for Approaching the Labor Market

One of the greatest problems of youth employment is that students receive only theoretical knowledge during the educational process. They lack the practical experience that is essential for their future careers. Therefore, they face problems and difficulties while searching for employment that expects previous work experience. To solve this problem we should find and understand the cause of it. The lack of practical experience in the educational system and the lack of time (because of intensive studies) for gaining basic work experience are the main reasons for these problems. We believe that the solution should be considered at the governmental level. In this way, the required action will be given legitimate status. First of all, practical experience should be developed through the modification of the curricula, by adding internships, vocational training and skills-oriented classes to the educational process. Also, providing students with practical experience in certain firms is strictly needed.

In addition to the previous problem, students also struggle with the obstacle of not knowing how and where to find and apply for jobs. In other words, they lack information about vacancies. They cannot take logical and planned steps while searching for employment. The main reason behind this difficulty is the lack of information in society and the educational system about employment. The problem can be solved through both governmental and private sector actions. We suggest that students should be informed

[15] See Taking It Global: http://www.takingitglobal.org/

about the right jobs in the educational institutes through the modification of their educational system. In addition, employees can be adequately consulted about the vacancies in the labor market through the implementation of consulting organizations in the private sector. In order to make society aware of the opportunities provided by the consulting centers, they should be advertised using commercial and social campaigns, such as pamphlets, websites and newsletters specifically targeted and distributed to youth.

3.g. Social Problems

Another problem related to youth unemployment is street violence, crime, drug abuse, and terminal illness such as AIDS. The problem is caused by the fact that uneducated young men and women, who are mostly unemployed, can be misguided or not assisted in finding sustainable employment at all. Therefore, the basic solution to this problem might be providing guidance for these young people. Young people might be guided by their parents, mass media, schools and relevant non-governmental organizations through the cooperation of governments. Some pamphlets, brochures, television and radio programs about the harm and threat of drugs and AIDS might be prepared. With the help of the mass media, many people (including youth and their parents) living in different communities can be informed and guided. In addition, some free information campaigns should be organized for young people. It can also be very useful to inform young men and women in secondary schools, through the use of rehabilitation programs prepared by specialists on the issue, or, if necessary, school curricula might be reorganized so that students can be informed about the dangers they are facing. Since the support and guidance of parents is a very important and necessary approach, parents should be involved in the guidance process as much as the young men and women. Apart from this, young people can be trained according to their abilities and capabilities. Through the training programs prepared by governments and volunteer organizations, young people will be safer. A good example for such organizations is the Children Protection and Guidance Organization (Cocuk Esirgeme Kurumu)[16] in Turkey. The organization, which was founded in the 19th century and has centers throughout Turkey, aims to provide protection, guidance and education for children who are in a need of financial and social support. When the children who grow up in the organization's facilities come of age, the organization supplies job opportunities for them, according to their interests and abilities.

[16] See http://www.shcek.gov.tr/

4. CONCLUSION

Our hope is that the suggested steps will be useful and beneficial in the process and that they will be adapted by policymakers at the national and international levels. In addition, we hope to empower civil society to take up suggested pathways to action in order to ensure sustainable livelihoods for the generations to come. We do need to be heard in order to make a difference. We appeal for the participation of youth, not only for the right to be heard, but also to take the chance to participate actively in policymaking and concrete implementation. We need to go one step further to produce action using the opportunities we are given. Together, even small differences can have a significant effect on society. Raising public awareness is one part of the process, but we believe that the real participation of youth only comes with the action produced. We trust that this paper will inspire youth, as well as governments and the private sector, to make an impact in their communities.

COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND AGENDA 21

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ACTION PAPER

1. INTRODUCTION

As youth, we view sustainable development as a far-reaching issue that extends beyond social, economic, political, cultural and environmental boundaries. While looking forward to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the participants of this committee recognise the hardships that our unsustainable behaviour has placed on our environment. Recognising the need for immediate action, we hope to promote initiatives for youth involvement with this Action Paper.

After looking through last year's *Water and Life and Sustainable Development* action papers, we have divided our paper into three sections: education, economics, and youth involvement. In the first section we focus on both informal and formal education through media, product labelling and NGOs. The second section focuses on the pros and cons of economic incentives for the promotion of sustainable development, through youth involvement in the economy. The third section sets out practical steps for youth empowerment in issues of sustainable development. We conclude with an option for the funding of some of the actions presented in the body of the paper. These distinct points allowed us to come up with actual plans for youth involvement and present a more detailed initiative for change.

2. EDUCATION

2.a.

"Cultivate your world as if you would live forever and prepare for your hereafter as if you would die tomorrow." - The Hadith

As youth, we realise that our education shapes our fundamental view of the world. Furthermore, we believe that educated youth make more sound, deliberate, and forward thinking decisions that lead to the development of more sustainable practices. We can learn from our past by actively pursuing education now. The power of education is that it will assure us the prospect of a more fruitful future.

2.b. Informal Education

Informal education comprises all those impressions, beliefs and concepts that youth are presented with outside the classroom.

Media

Media, in all its forms, provides information that shapes attitudes, especially among youth. As a key influence on popular culture, media can be a powerful promoter of sustainable consumption patterns. We believe that media has a duty to present crucial information on government and corporate practices that will allow youth, as consumers, to make informed purchasing decisions. As youth, we urge other young people to be actively critical of the media by questioning its quality with regard to content and the presentation of information. We value the freedom of the press, in which we are presented with varying opinions on multiple issues. We want to encourage the media to report and disclose information, from a variety of sources, on issues relating to sustainable development, so that we can accurately perceive and understand the society in which we function. However, if mainstream media fails to provide us with information about sustainable development issues, it is in our interest to seek out that information ourselves. Media-promoted transparency will help youth hold governments and corporations accountable for their actions. We believe that, with this accountability, governments and corporations can be persuaded to improve their reactionary and unsustainable practices.

Advertising

Within the field of advertising, the full price of the product must be presented. No product is produced without collateral costs on a social, environmental and economic level. In order to make firms transparent and responsible service providers to the public, advertisers must display the sources of labour used and the environmental costs accrued in the production of an item. We propose that advertisers be required by law to include a statement on the labour conditions under which a product was made and/or a statement on the environmental by-products caused by the production process. Just as Agenda 21 is based on stakeholder equity, so too must the media base its practices on equity, fairness, and transparency with the public.

Product labelling

The full cost of making a product should not only be expressed in advertising, but also in product labelling. We believe specific product labelling gives valuable knowledge to youth, allowing them to make informed decisions and to take sustainable actions. Product labelling can serve as a warning to youth and facilitate the adoption of future sustainable practices. Youth must recognise effective product labelling as a tool that empowers them to influence the practices of industry. Policymakers should require companies to label their products, specifically citing labour and environmental practices. This form of product labelling would not discriminate against specific firms, as all firms would be required to label their products, regardless of their environmental practices. The public has a right to know if a product is being produced in a manner that violates the standard production laws of their country. In other words, it is crucial that corporations be prevented from attempting to avoid the standards of the consumer by shifting production to another location. The facts indicated on product labels will inform youth in their role as consumers. We, as youth, must be educated and informed on the realities of the products we consume. Only when we are armed with this information will we be able to act in a sustainable manner. With relevant knowledge on the production methods of a product, we believe that youth will alter their value systems and choose to purchase products that are more protective of their futures. Thus, firms who produce sustainable products and promote their growth will find it profitable to adopt environmentally sound practices. Product labelling should be encouraged, not only in industrialised countries, but in developing countries as well, in an assortment of languages.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

As organisations outside of governmental operations, NGOs serve as valuable suppliers of supplemental education. NGOs should be encouraged to establish educational programmes that facilitate the education of youth in places where formal government education programmes are lacking or non-existent. In places where government education programs are already well established, NGOs can foster individual initiatives by youth to pursue their own education. Frequently, youth have desires that they do not know how to realise on their own - NGOs can provide the support and services to help youth realise their goals. While not necessarily directly related to sustainability, youth across the globe must believe that they can be more proactive and involved in societal affairs before they will be ready to

establish themselves as the leaders of tomorrow. Only when barriers to societal youth involvement are removed by NGOs, governments, and the actions of the youth themselves, will youth be able to take their place as promoters of sustainable development. Therefore we feel that NGOs should focus their efforts on Less Developed Countries (LDCs), where youth have been marginalised and where the most fundamental progress can be made. Recognising the value of membership in NGOs, we urge youth to join these organisations in order to make use of their collective resources to further sustainable development practices.

Beyond established programs, NGOs, like the media, can also disseminate information that reveals insights into the practices of governments and corporations critical to youth's understanding of how the world functions. Equipped with this knowledge, youth can make informed decisions that result in sustainable actions. Towards that end, we feel that NGOs need to be given consistent access to appropriate venues, in order to provide the public with statistics and opinions that encourage the adoption of sustainable consumption habits. Youth involved in NGOs should seek out opportunities to voice their opinions.

Youth-based and youth-run Non-Governmental Organisations

As youth, we believe that we can be powerful educators of our peers. Through youth-run or youth-based NGOs, like THIMUN, peer-education through institutions, as well as everyday interaction, youth have the opportunity to become informed of new perspectives concerning more sustainable ways of living. A strong education will provide the foundation needed for youth NGOs to be effective. We encourage youth to organise their peers around single and attainable projects, such as maintaining a local compost heap or volunteering on a weekly basis to teach literacy. Taking into account recent advances in technology, youth must communicate with their global peers, by all means possible, including the Internet. Through communication, youth can share their experiences and discern which actions are most effective and realistic for their situation.

2.c. Formal Education

Formal education is education that is provided by the government.

Youth Education

Our focus here is on the structure of youth education, thus we will address various factors that affect the quality of that education. Formal education is structured by required curricula appropriate to the needs of particular nations. We encourage youth to be critical of their own education and to value and apply the knowledge they receive through formal education. Just as certain nations are more economically and socially developed than others, the education systems in these nations are at various stages of development. Thus, when we address the question of curriculum design, we, as proactive youth who are interested in the quality of our education, must keep in mind first the overall goal of education as it relates to sustainable development issues, and second the realities of the current infrastructure in educational institutions in particular nations, as these factors will influence the feasibility of curriculum reform. While youth do not themselves have the power to reform their curricula, we can appeal to our educational boards. It would be valuable if venues were created specifically for the purpose of allowing students to provide feedback concerning their education. There must be an opportunity for administrators to turn this feedback into concrete changes.

Teaching analytical skills

We believe that education is one of the main tools that can provide youth with the methods that allow them to identify, analyse, and appropriately respond to the problems they face in maintaining a sustainable world. It is important that youth realise that they do not have to hold advanced degrees in bio-chemistry, for example, as any amount of knowledge in a field can be useful and applicable. That is why it is important to question the quality of education - the curriculum should address the existing conditions of the local area where the youth are being educated. Concerning curriculum design, we have discovered that certain models work well in certain nations but do not work in other nations, as these nations have different needs. However, we believe that it is useful to mention two examples of models that address the present need for curriculum reform. The first model addresses the needs of educationally equipped nations, who have successful secondary education systems in place. Our second model presents an option for youth improvement

where secondary education is not yet present. None of the specific examples are meant to be taken out of context and applied to regions in which a supportive infrastructure is not in place. However, we believe that it is valuable for us to address some specific goals that would increase the quality of the curricula, both in equipped and under-equipped countries.

In countries with established secondary education, youth need to be instructed in the fields of environmental science, economics, technology, and possibly philosophy, so that they can develop the analytical skills required to question, evaluate, and reform individual value systems. In addition, students should be instructed in consumer decision-making skills, either by integrating this into the overall curricula or by introducing an additional class. While advocating such specialised courses is unrealistic, as students do not have enough time to pursue an eclectic assortment of classes in addition to basic courses, we feel it would be appropriate for at least one course, in one of these areas that help to develop analytical skills, to be required.

For less equipped systems, we feel it is necessary to develop basic analytical skills on a more general level, for example basic courses in sciences. It would be helpful if these science courses were tailored to address the conditions of the local region in which they were taught. Field labs are useful, as they allow youth to apply their knowledge. It is important that curricula value the synthesis of related studies, with a goal of equipping youth with the tools needed to understand the complex issues of sustainable development.

Formal education leading to informal education

Formal education also affects the informal and continued educational processes of youth. We believe that youth must be encouraged to take individual initiatives in their own education. For instance, habits of continued education should be taught, such as seeking more information in a daily newspaper. These sorts of sustainable educational practices will lead to a stronger understanding of the world, which is critical to an involved and informed youth. Youth must be instructed on how to interpret statistics, as facts and figures can reveal startling realities concerning the current conditions of our world. However, youth must also remember to question statistics, as they can easily be manipulated. It is important that youth seek multiple perspectives, remembering to consider the source, as each source of information has its own bias. In a world tending towards unsustainability, we must be critical in examining the world around us. Finally, it is important to be

continually aware of events and developments in technology and to continue our personal development along with the evolution of the world around us. The adoption of forward thinking processes will allow us to shape our world more effectively, thus allowing us to sustain ourselves.

Education of educators

As teachers educate youth, so too should teachers be continually educated on the modifications and modernisations within their field, in order to give youth an up-to-date understanding of the tenets of sustainable development. If educators do not understand sustainable development, youth will not be accurately instructed about sustainable development problems in any formal setting. A critical problem for youth is finding reliable and comprehensive information on how to pursue sustainable practices. We believe that teachers, especially science and history teachers, can be superb sources of this knowledge. First, however, programmes must be developed by NGOs and policymakers to include the topic of sustainable development into training programmes for educators. With prepared and informed educators, curricula can be adapted to include more information on sustainable development, as teachers will be able to effectively teach in these areas. Additionally, educators will be prepared to work with their students outside of class, perhaps in related extra-curricular activities, varying from Model UN programmes to science clubs, to encourage sustainable development initiatives. Returning to the idea that youth have unrealised desires, prepared educators can encourage and aid youth in realising their visions.

In order to include educators in the process of Agenda 21, we believe that educators should be made the tenth Major Group of Agenda 21. This step will give them a guaranteed place at all Preparatory Committees and reassessments of Agenda 21. Also, as education is frequently called upon in Agenda 21, it is only logical to include educators as stakeholders and as a Major Group. Furthermore, Major Group status could facilitate the changes and improvements we, as youth, wish to see from our teachers.

2.d. Turning Knowledge Into Action

As a final step for youth, we must turn our education into action. Knowledge in and of itself is useless until it becomes concrete, real action. In this paper we propose several actions, but youth must also take their own initiatives. In order for these ideas to have any real-world value, we, the writers of this paper, and other pro-active youth like us, must put them into action. Whether action is taken on an individual or collective level, youth must use their education to concretely promote sustainable development.

3. ECONOMICS

3.a. The Relationship Between Economics and the Environment

We believe, as youth, that the needs of the environment and the needs of the economy need not be in conflict. In fact, they can be most effectively realised when working in harmony. As an economy relies on resources, so too does an environment - if the economy destroys the environment in which it operates, so it destroy the base of its economy.

3.b. Taxation

We feel that taxation and government incentives initially promote sustainable development. However, we also feel that sustainable development should be promoted for its long-term benefits and that taxation and incentives are not an ideal long-term solution to the problems of sustainable development. As sustainable development is a global issue, if a tax system were to be used to confront sustainable development issues, the tax system would have to be a global tax system. Unfortunately, there is currently no sufficient infrastructure capable of supporting such a global tax system. Instead of creating the enforcement bodies necessary to create such a system, we feel that nations should incorporate 'the polluter-pays principle' into their already existing tax laws. This principle, already present in some places, will reaffirm that every business has a responsibility to the community. Additionally, it may spark industry research into more efficient and environmentally friendly ways of operating.

In the long run though, we do not see taxation as an ideal solution to sustainability. Because taxation implies that market-based economic systems must be altered to make environmentally friendly production self-sustainable, taxation cannot be a long-term solution for sustainability. If there is no realisation that environmental needs and economic

needs can be satisfied best when they are mutually respected, environmentally unsound practices will continue, with the basic taxes being paid by large corporations without any appreciable effect on profits. Also, businesses need a certain degree of stability to work. Ultimately, meeting ever-changing environmental regulations would not be nearly as effective as becoming sustainable on one's own.

Regardless of government subsidies or taxation, simple changes that add sustainability to production processes should be implemented, rather than avoided in favour of governmental incentives and taxation. Furthermore, in ensuring that products are produced in the most energy efficient manner, more products would be created at a cheaper price. Not only would the company be economically profitable, but also environmentally friendly. Thus the consumption patterns could begin with youth who have an environmental, as well as economic, mindset. This system will enable companies to make a larger profit, by appealing to a larger consumer group through better and more efficient practices.

3.c. The Power of Youth in Effecting Change in Markets

Youth represent a critical consumer demographic in the market. Advertising sectors spend a great amount of time and energy conducting market research, in order to discover the best ways to increase sales within this youth demographic. Industry attempts to meet the demands of all portions of the market, including this critical youth demographic. Industry uses natural resource supplies and converts these materials into usable products. It is self-defeating to exhaust the resources of the environment, for it exhausts the resources of industry. Consumers want to safeguard the luxury of consumption at a dynamic equilibrium. Industry strives to consistently supply the market at this desired rate. Therefore, as the physical amount of natural resources in the world is fixed, it is in the interest of both industry and consumers alike to support environmentally sound practices, so that the natural resources of the world will not be depleted, thus inhibiting the ability of markets to function as desired.

While it is the environmentally unfriendly practices of industry, such as strip-mining and clear-cutting done in the name of cost effective production, that are directly at fault for having damaged the global ecosystem, consumers occupy a position of power within markets. If consumers refuse to endorse environmentally unfriendly practices by removing

their investments in companies that use such practices, a shift in consumer preferences, and thus demand, will occur. Then, in order to remain competitive in a market, industry must identify the reasons for the change in preferences. Once companies discover, through market research, that consumers are interested in purchasing products that promote the tenets of sustainability (meaning products for which the environment is neither harmed in the production process nor in the use of these products), then industry will discover that it is within its own interest to discard environmentally unfriendly practices in favour of more sustainable practices. The adoption of sustainable practices will result in a mutually beneficial economic relationship between industry and consumers.

As we have said, youth represent a critical consumer demographic in the market. Consumers have real power to effect change within markets and youth, as consumers, share that influence. Youth can effect change that will move industry toward adopting more sustainable practices simply by being conscious and disciplined in choosing the products that they ultimately purchase, especially essential products they buy regularly. Youth must be instructed on how to evaluate whether or not a product is environmentally friendly, something which we address in the education section of this paper. The important action is to urge youth to recognise their position of power within markets and to have the discipline to make wise purchases.

However, we also recognise the needs of LDCs to use their resources to promote their own development. We further recognise that environmentally safe and sound practices, while being ideal in these situations, may not be appropriate. Regarding the promotion of sustainable practices, consumers and youth should also have the propensity to favour products that promote development in LDCs.

3.d. Improving Youth Involvement in Current Industry

Small panels of youth can be organised by industries to express the desires of youth in a specific region. Thus, not only will the industry be made aware of the market tendencies of youth, but youth will be able understand the market practices of industry. Youth will also have a stake in industry, which will lead them to a more enfranchised and responsible position in a process in which they currently only participate as consumers.

3.e. Industry, Youth, and Local Agenda 21s

Youth who serve on advisory panels will have a sufficient understanding to also participate in local Agenda 21 efforts. These youth could, in turn, involve other youth and encourage the participation of youth as a group. With contacts in industry and a significant understanding of the industrial process, these youth would be useful in integrating normally detached industrial interests into local Agenda 21 policies. The youth could become one of many contacts between local Agenda 21 projects and the industries of the area. As Agenda 21 incorporates the needs of major stakeholders, local Agenda 21 efforts must incorporate the needs of youth and industry, in order to be successful. In addition, with the powerful ability of youth to communicate, youth from different local Agenda 21 projects could exchange information on their experiences. Thus, local Agenda 21 policies, which have struggled to address the interests of both industry and youth, can now begin to enfranchise both in a logical and effective manner.

3.f. Youth Entrepreneurship For Sustainability

Youth, having been exposed to industry in partnerships and through the involvement mentioned above, could become entrepreneurs, pursuing methods for sustainable development.

Beyond simply involving youth in advisory roles, youth should be encouraged to take up entrepreneurship. Not only does youth entrepreneurship increase the numbers of viable sustainable livelihoods, but youth entrepreneurs provide an opportunity for youth to gain direct involvement in the economy. Offering an education in entrepreneurship, from both NGOs and governments, will encourage the individual initiatives of youth. We propose setting up government-funded centres within school systems to train youth in labour skills such as weaving, carpentry, or other locally applicable capabilities. These fundamental skills will provide the basis for youth enterprises.

In order to promote entrepreneurship, governments can offer credits in school and subsidies to those attempting to start up their own businesses based on sustainable practices. Established industries may have a harder time reworking their systems to take into account sustainable practices, whereas youth entrepreneurs will start with the premise of sustainability.

As youth become involved in entrepreneurship, other youth will become enfranchised in sustainable industry as natural peer-to-peer education occurs. Successful youth entrepreneurs will provide real examples of the profitability of sustainability. As a new generation of industrial practices is created, the overall economic and environmental wellbeing of a region will improve. Moreover, youth will have received life skills by starting businesses, increasing economic wellbeing, increasing involvement in politics, and producing more jobs for other youth.

We, as youth, need programmes to help us learn this and to set it up. We also need initial investment by governments and NGOs in order to make this a reality. We propose that this funding could be provided either by youth allocation boards, as described in 'Youth involvement in sustainability', or according to locally defined criteria on sustainability.

3.g. Regulation of Transnational Corporations

As youth whose futures are being increasingly affected by transnational corporations, we feel that these corporations should be under some sort of regulatory control. While youth cannot define and enforce these judicial guidelines themselves, we would like to express our desire that policymakers make an effort to implement some regulatory control, perhaps in a liability based system, in order to gain more control over the influences that transnational corporations have on us all as consumers. The goal of business-consumer equality can be best realised through corporate transparency and better international co-operation.

3.h. Privatisation of State-Owned Resource Monopolies

As youth, we believe that the sell-off of state companies that control resources, especially water, can create an environment where natural competition results in technological improvements and more effective resource distribution. As privatisation takes place, however, regulators must ensure that sustainable development goals, such as access of services to the poor and low prices, are not forgotten. United Nations conventions on social and economic rights should be upheld by all governments, as the needs of youth in less developed regions must not be neglected in favour of higher profits. Private resource distributors cannot be allowed to refuse service to any region based on the regions' inability to pay or its remote location. While we do not wish to encourage unwise settlements that are far from natural sources of water, we cannot neglect the needs of youth

in any region in the world. With access to resources, the people of LDCs will be able to build viable, world-class businesses allowing them to join the global economy.

3.i. Official Development Assistance

It is essential to raise the effectiveness of official development assistance by linking it to the implementation of development goals that are considered important by the institutions closest to the people. We must ensure that the structural adjustment policies advocated by the international financial institutions, such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), manage to address the recipient country's individual needs, without an array of economic, social and environmental problems. As youth, we feel that official development assistance must imperatively go to fields like education, infrastructure, personnel training and institution building. Moreover, creating domestic and foreign investment incentives for the financing of the transfer of environmentally sound technology and providing tax incentives for 'green' investments can promote research and development of cleaner production technologies and accelerate the commercialisation and diffusion of those same technologies.

Additionally, youth must have resources available to them to affect change. Thus, we call on the nations of the world to meet their agreed goal of 0.7% of the Gross National Product (GNP) for official development assistance. We also urge the Commission on Sustainable Development to enforce a greater regulatory review and monitoring process on contributions and implementation of Agenda 21.

4. GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

4.a. Introduction

A young child never stops running around because it feels like it has to be doing something. The youth of our world today are faced with a similar feeling - are we doing enough? We all know that today's youth are tomorrow's adults. Part of this feeling stems from the fact that we do not really have access to the tools we need to change our world. Youth involvement in efforts to promote sustainability will allow us to become actively involved as stakeholders at a young age.

While many of the changes we propose cannot be immediately or directly implemented by youth, we appeal to policymakers and government authorities to take our suggestions to heart and consider them as serious suggestions for the future. Since youth will have to live with the consequences of today's decisions, it is worth including them in policy and decision making processes.

4.b. Youth as Stakeholders

Youth must become active stakeholders in policy creation and decision making. This will more likely occur at local levels, where youth will be able to see and feel the real effects of their decisions.

Once youth have been involved on a local level, they will then be able to involve themselves on a national level, which is a reason why national and international involvement must also be taken into account.

By making youth part of the process, they will receive civic experience which will make them feel empowered and they will become proactive members of society. More importantly, they will feel responsible for decisions about the future, as they themselves will be involved in the decision making process.

As youth are often young dependants, or start at the bottom of a social hierarchy, empowerment of youth must be done with cultural sensitivity. In a location where senior members of society are responsible for decision making, youth must find a way to promote their involvement in a manner that can coexist with current cultural systems. This applies not only to youth, but also to NGOs and international aid providers, as they must be aware of the cultural context in which they operate. The value of youth involvement should be recognised by development projects and be included in manuals for international development aid.

4.c. Different Methods For Involving Youth

Give youth responsibility for a small part of a local government budget. The choices offered to the panel must include items which will directly affect youth. This would show youth that they do have a say in government affairs and that they can make a difference. It will also give them a sense of responsibility. Having decided to fund a local park, youth

will be less likely to vandalise it, as they will have a sense of responsibility for that park. Additionally, it will be an educational experience, which will encourage them to take further part in decision-making processes.

Participatory planning should be used. When decisions are made which affect people in a given locality, the local community should be informed of the plans and allowed to criticise them and add suggestions. Experts should be open to the community's questions and suggestions, so that the community can participate in planning. In this process, youth should be a separate group with equal status. This system will also give decision-makers a sense that youth, as stakeholders, can have a voice in development planning.

Regional and national platforms where youth can monitor and evaluate the implementation of local, regional, and national Agenda 21 efforts. This will broaden youth's perception of politics on a larger scale and show how the concept of sustainability works in practice. In different parts of the world, these platforms will have to be established in different ways. In developed regions, advisors will be needed for set-up and monitoring of the youth platforms, but these platforms should be essentially self-sustaining.

Networks must be formed between various regional, national and international platforms, so that efforts can be co-ordinated and information and experience shared. For example, the environment is not an issue that is confined by political borders, so youth platforms must share information in order to get the most complete picture of the world around them.

We recognise the value of peer education and the motivation of young people through youth-run NGOs. The main benefit of youth assisting youth is that those who are teaching have already gained a proficient understanding of the subject, namely methods for working towards sustainable development. Young people can understand the limits of youth involvement and are able to realise the great potential. Additionally, sixteen to twenty-five year olds naturally relate better to their peers and can spark enthusiasm in them.

Umbrella organisations and networks can co-ordinate efforts and help in exchanging advice and experience, as well as information. In some cases peer-to-peer education can work within the same organisations as the umbrella networks. For example, a strong youth network could dispatch youth educators to meet with their peers. The Internet can serve

youth in co-ordination efforts. Despite the inherent divisions that incorporating new technologies creates, efforts should still be made to bring together youth who are sufficiently equipped with this technology.

Efforts towards developing youth as stakeholders could benefit from foreign financial support. Aid can be used for facilitating their establishment and exchange of knowledge. Money is necessary for development in any form, and it is crucial that youth be developed as participating stakeholders at a young age, so that they can grow and mature in a productive manner. In order to achieve long term sustainability, future generations must be equipped with the tools necessary to participate in society at a young age.

Young people have a certain quality that should be harnessed in order to provide a fresh perspective to the problems of sustainable development. Youth is a time of change, openness, enthusiasm and bringing about regeneration. If youth are capable of seeing what is wrong with the establishment, they can be easily motivated to bring about change. For instance, youth can be especially effective in bringing attention and change to such issues as a lack of transparency and a lack of good governance. Youth, if they feel properly enfranchised through local, regional, and national organisations, can affect non-violent and constructive social change, leading to a more transparent and efficient governance.

Youth NGOs need help in recruitment. Universities and colleges should be encouraged to select motivated and capable individuals who can become involved in youth NGOs. In this way young people's potential as proactive members of society can be harnessed in working towards sustainable development goals.

5. OPPORTUNITY FOR FUNDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR POLICY

5.a. Reasoning

This action paper was written with the intention of providing a policy statement for those delegates from the THIMUN Youth Assembly who will be lobbying our position at the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002. In Chapter 25, Section 11 of Agenda 21, USD 1.5 million are allocated to youth involvement in the implementation of the policy contained within Agenda 21. While it is necessary to spend time developing strong and clear policies, the mere existence of policy, such as the policy contained in this action

paper, is not enough to change the world. The world will only be changed when actions are taken. The members of the THIMUN delegation attending this year's world summit are prime candidates to receive the necessary funding to turn the ideas mentioned in this paper into reality. Further research is needed in order to write a coherent request for a grant, which will contain a specific plan of action deserving of funding. The authors of this paper strongly urge the delegates travelling to Johannesburg, South Africa, to pursue this opportunity for funding, in order to turn the ideas contained in this paper into actions, as this is the only way by which these ideas will achieve any real world value.

5.b. Suggestions For Grants

As the members of the THIMUN Youth Assembly Delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002 live in different parts of the world, the creation of one 'Local Agenda 21' for this community is not possible. However, it would be possible for each of these delegates, upon returning to their separate places of origin, to act individually on the suggestions found in this action paper. Each of these delegates could look to their own communities for people interested in becoming involved in a 'Local Agenda 21' in their respective region. For ease, funding would have to be given to one body capable of managing the administrative aspects of the grant, including internal allocations of potential grant funds. Next year, 2003, marks the 35th Annual Session of THIMUN. The official launch of the THIMUN Youth Network (TYN) is currently scheduled to occur during this THIMUN week. TYN is run by youth with the ability to identify, design, implement, and follow-up on projects encouraging the involvement of youth, pursuant to Chapter 25, Section 9, Clause (g) of Agenda 21. TYN is ideally suited to serve as the administrative body for this proposed project. With a strong coalition of interested youth from around the world, the TYN would be able to organise these efforts in many regions, including in LDCs. This structure would facilitate the communication efforts necessary to manage the grant.

6. CONCLUSION

This action paper will serve as the basic policy document for the THIMUN delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa. We will lobby for this policy at the summit.

Throughout this paper we have searched for collective and individual initiatives that can be taken by youth. Expanding beyond a strong informal and formal education for youth, we want to stress the importance of youth involvement in local governance, local Agenda 21 efforts, and the

economy. As youth, we must utilise our potential in becoming proactive stakeholders, who no longer play the role of a silent bystander, but effect change in problems that we would otherwise inherit. We believe that youth are a critical source for solutions, because we are the only 'transition sector'. As youth, we will effect change when we are young. Later, we will participate as adults in all the other sectors of society. Those solutions that start with youth will have ramifications throughout the future.

This paper stands as an acknowledgement of what we need to do. We must now translate our words into actions, making youth aware and affecting concrete changes. Enfranchised youth will be able to implement, not only our own youth initiatives, but also the initiatives set forth in Chapter 25 of Agenda 21. Ultimately, future plans resulting from a greater convergence of ideas by newly aware youth will have the support and infrastructure that they require for implementation. If we use both the infrastructures already set up and the interest already present, then we will be able to affect change in the problems that we would otherwise inherit.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH

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ACTION PAPER

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of time, health and social issues have been the bane of human existence. There was a time when diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis were a major concern for health researchers and a cause of hopelessness in the search for vaccines. However, now a more deadly virus baffles the minds of the learned and defies all rules of science. An estimated forty million people live with AIDS or HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 8.4% of the population are affected by this disease and in some countries more than 30% of the population are affected. In South Africa, for example, one in nine people are living with AIDS or HIV, roughly 4.7 million people. The rest of Africa also has staggering numbers of cases, making this a real African problem.

Social issues, more specifically social exclusion and the disadvantages facing young people, mean we should shift our attention from the dying to those who can live normal lives if a little more attention is given to their needs.

The youth are our concern, as they are the foundation on which our future is built. We believe that youth involvement is paramount in the crusade against AIDS/HIV. As Abraham Maslow once said, "What is necessary to change a person is to change his awareness of himself". The awaking of youth everywhere, especially in Africa, is what we hope to achieve.

2. EDUCATION FOR PREVENTION

2.a. Introduction

There has been perhaps no greater preventable epidemic in the world in recent history than the AIDS virus. HIV infection and the resulting AIDS disease has claimed the lives of far too many people, given today's advanced society. In a world where information can be gleaned at the click of a button, human life should not be taken so easily, especially given that AIDS is preventable. So much has been said and is being done to eradicate this problem, but unfortunately, there is still a lack of basic education and awareness amongst the general public.

Taking into consideration the disturbing statistics, we feel that the AIDS epidemic in Africa deserves our immediate attention. If figures like those reported by the United

Nations continue to grow, it will not be long before we are forced to live in a dying world, where our children are born into disease with little chance of survival.

Our hope for ensuring that this possibility does not come to fruition is through the education and awareness of youth, especially in Africa. In order to achieve the goal of world-wide education, we believe it is important to tackle four main obstacles, namely:

a) Lack of education in rural areas
b) The role of young women in society
c) Illiteracy
d) Cultural beliefs

2.b. Problems

Lack of education in rural areas

Although there are many programs being implemented in an attempt to halt the increasing numbers of AIDS and HIV victims, most focus on urban areas where awareness is already prominent. The rural areas, where the disease is rife, are left unaware as a result of lack of education. According to a UNICEF study, more than 70% of adolescent girls aged fifteen to nineteen in Somalia and more than 40% in Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone have never heard of AIDS. This is largely due to the fact that a majority of people live outside the urban areas, where education is in dire need of reform. It is imperative that each and every child is educated throughout the continent, in order for there to be a beneficial change in the future.

Role of young women in society

Another major problem hindering the education of African youth is the role of women in society. Women are not afforded equal participation in society. In many cases women are objects - they are meant to be seen and not heard. This is extremely problematic with regard to the spread of HIV because it does not allow women control of their sexual relationships. HIV is spread more easily due to high incidence of rape and sexual abuse. Indeed, more than half of all women who are diagnosed as HIV positive do not disclose their status, because they are afraid of harassment, violence, abandonment, and discrimination. The societal hierarchy of male and female relationships must be dealt with before any progress can be seen.

Illiteracy

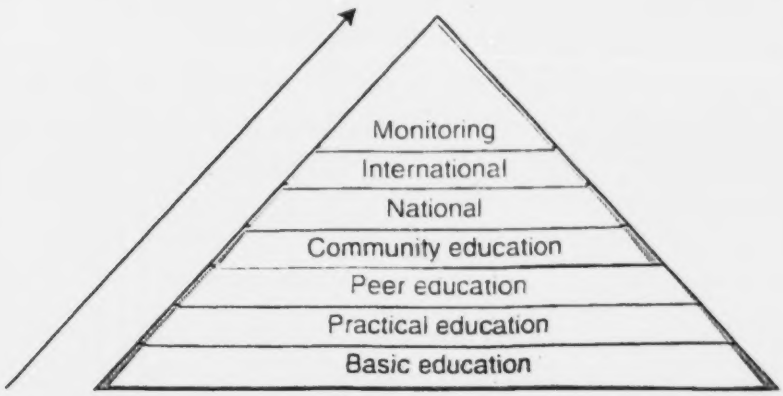
The low literacy rate among African youth serves as a major setback in the spread of education about AIDS and HIV. Education is the key to making well-informed choices. Without the education necessary to make these choices, the youth of Africa will carry on being unaware of how to make the right decisions, thus living in ignorance and continuing the vicious cycle.

Cultural beliefs

Cultural beliefs are the backbone of many African societies. They are essential to a sense of belonging and for preserving cultural pride and history. However, in some cases these traditions have not evolved with the advancement of the society, making some of the practices impractical and unsafe. In certain ethnic groups, polygamy is the norm and protected sex is unheard of. For example, a young girl who is married off to an older man with many wives is put at greater risk of contracting HIV because of her cultural status in society. Because of her young age, she is expected to be obedient and submissive, or risk being cut off from the family. These types of tradition do not help to preserve a culture, they help to destroy a society.

2.c. Model Education Plan

It is hoped that with this model education plan, information would spread from young adults through to the youth, gradually increasing awareness. At the top of the pyramid is a monitoring scheme, which would evaluate whether the system works. This diagram shows our plan of action and different stages of education in the prevention of HIV:



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2.d. Solution

Basic education

This program is designed to make use of young adults who could devote a 'Year of Humanitarian Service' to their country by teaching younger students in an informal environment. College graduates and volunteers would travel to rural areas to present preventative education to primary and secondary pupils with the use of stories, videos, games, and other educational aids. Pupils and the young adult teachers would be so close in age that it would be easier for them to relate to each other and to talk about controversial issues, thus opening a dialogue and eliminating some social taboos. Young adults would also benefit, because they would learn the importance of education, humanitarian service, and giving back to their community while simultaneously being able to travel and see some of their country. This is the first level of education, whereby basic information would be exchanged and facts and preventative measures would be explained in detail to the students.

Practical Education

Education is not just theory, but should be practical too. It is with this in mind that we perceive the importance of education on the use of condoms and other contraceptives. Contraceptives are essential for the protection of youth against AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Increased distribution of condoms to youth is imperative for the prevention of infection. We propose increased spending on condoms for free distribution to non-traditional areas such as concerts, schools, buses, bathrooms and other areas where youth can have easy access to them. The success rate of areas that have implemented increased condom distribution has been phenomenal. In Uganda, a combined program of increased condom distribution, education, and decentralised programs has caused a decrease in HIV prevalence from 29.5% in 1992 to 11.25% in 2000. Results like these clearly support increased condom distribution to reduce the rate of infection.

Peer Education

The next step in education is allowing young people to feel comfortable talking about their situation and working together to improve it. Youth based community organisations work together to promote events and group activities that raise awareness and spread information. American youth groups such as Teens Taking Charge (TTC) work together

within their communities to provide small concerts, rallies, and other fundraising events that incorporate events and a sense of fun while also sharing information. TTC is also responsible for bringing presenters to schools and making group presentations to younger students in attempts to start education early. Other workshop events such as The Ryan White Conference meet annually with hundreds of students from all around the country to discuss how best to teach other students about AIDS and HIV. The interaction of students represents a trend towards cultural acceptance of people who are already infected and a concern for those who might become infected. In Africa, a similar situation could be accomplished with the implementation of school groups and clubs to discuss the prevention of AIDS and HIV, and organisation of similar events in other schools. The start of an annual youth conference similar to Ryan White would also help to make peer education and interaction more prominent.

Community Education

This will be a step up from the peer education level. It would consist of more young people with a common cause, namely spreading information about AIDS/HIV to their peers. This would incorporate all forms of the media in order to be more intense in reaching out to young people.

The use of advertisements designed by young people and an increase of awareness amongst the youth in radio and television programmes can be employed as a major part of these community education programs.

The themes for advertisements can be adopted from art competitions designed especially for this purpose. The best work would be awarded with a prize and this would ensure that young people were eager to participate. Positive Action is an example of a similar program already in existence. In South Africa, Positive Action is a private sector organisation dedicated to creating an income for families and orphans affected by, and infected with, HIV and AIDS, in order to lessen the burden of poverty of economically unstable countries. It has created an Information Dissemination Project consisting of media coverage, peer education, a billboard and poster project to spread information, and a skill share exchange program to create income for impoverished families. An organisation like Positive Action can easily be emulated in other countries in order to facilitate the advertisement of organisations working to combat AIDS and HIV.

National Level / International Network

It is also important to involve the populations of different nations in reducing the spread of HIV. One of the easiest ways to attract the attention of young people all over the world is to organise celebrity concerts to create music with a message. Programs such as 'Stars against AIDS', a program started in Russia which featured concerts with information sessions during breaks, helped the youth to realise the severity of AIDS and HIV. Celebrity visits are a rarity for most African countries, so this influence would have a profound effect. We believe that life stories about world famous personalities suffering from HIV/AIDS will attract the attention of the youth.

Another very serious problem is the lack of information about the events and programs held by international organisations. Even World AIDS Day, which is held annually on the 1st of December by UNAIDS, is still not acknowledged world-wide. Stronger advertising for events like World AIDS Day is necessary in order to ensure world-wide awareness.

Monitoring

The final need for a full educational plan is an evaluation of the programme to ensure that all the steps are followed. We suggest that regular surveys be taken to test the standard level of knowledge of Africa's youth. Monitoring the prevalence of HIV cases, the increase or decrease of condom sales, and the proportion of schools providing HIV/AIDS education, will all result in a sound picture of the level of education needed for future generations.

In addition, monitoring of the testing facilities is imperative. The public must feel comfortable going into a testing facility and confident that the information they will receive will be accurate and safe. It is with this in mind that we propose that UNAIDS sponsors a certification program so that all testing facilities will be of the same standard. Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire showed that 80% of pregnant women who agree to undergo an HIV test do not return to collect the results. Another study showed that only 50% of women knew where they could be tested. Of those 50% only six have been tested. This is due to misconceptions about the severity of the disease, as well as insecurities about the safety of the testing facilities. It is imperative that testing facilities are certified as meeting certain standards in order for the public to feel comfortable being tested for HIV.

3. EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING FOR AFRICAN YOUTH

3.a. Introduction

Our aim is to help young people infected with HIV/AIDS (PWAs) by:

a) Maintaining their mental stability;

b) Understanding their physical changes;

c) Informing family and friends of the infected about the virus and its effects;

d) Helping their families to develop their ability to support and encourage the patient;

e) Removing the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS.

3.b. Education For Infected People

Through the establishment of a therapy group called African Youth Against AIDS (AYAA) under the supervision of UNICEF and UNAIDS, young PWAs will be able to maintain mental stability and grow up living their life to its fullest potential. To establish this group, we will make use of the funds given to UNAIDS by the World Bank. AYAA will initially be established in urban areas of African nations, then if this proves effective, gradually spread to remote regions. The therapy sessions will be directed towards young AIDS victims under the age of 25. We hope that these sessions will be held and directed by PWAs, especially by the young victims who will be sensitive to the culture and tradition of the area. This will create job opportunities and provide income for PWAs. Counsellors will be selected from within the community and be trained by specialists on youth development and AIDS by UNICEF and UNAIDS. These counsellors will also be given resources and materials such as condoms and information packs to aid in their teaching. The main purposes of this initiative are to:

a) Encourage young people to speak out about their feelings towards HIV/AIDS;

b) Help young people learn to accept their current situation and not to feel alienated from the community;

c) Enable young people with HIV/AIDS to be more prepared to deal with others' reactions;

d) Cultivate a positive outlook amongst PWAs about their future;

e) Encourage PWAs to make full use of their experience and unique perspective on HIV/AIDS to help other victims;

f) Emphasise a holistic education as the cornerstone of any society.

These therapy groups will also educate infected people in understanding their current condition and give detailed information about the effects of HIV/AIDS and its treatments.

With regards to treatments, we need to stress the importance to pharmaceutical companies of relinquishing aspects of their intellectual property rights, more specifically patenting, when dealing with developing nations where HIV/AIDS is a national emergency.

3.c. Education For Family and Friends

Family and friends play an important role in helping young infected individuals grow to be productive and valuable members of the community. The most effective way to help the infected is for the family to gain a full understanding of their physical conditions and emotional state. This will be carried out in collaboration with AYAA. These group sessions will allow family/friends and the next generation to be better informed and prepared to accept PWAs. The goals of these sessions are to:

a) Inform family and friends about the facts of HIV/AIDS;
b) Invite family and friends to participate in a program where interaction between the infected and non-infected individuals will be encouraged;
c) Enable families to provide emotional and practical support for the young AIDS victims;
d) Give advice and resources to parents in order to allow them to give a well-rounded view of AIDS to their children.

3.d. Education For Non-Infected People

In unison with AYAA, non-infected people will be educated to rid them of their biased opinions towards PWAs. These informative sessions can be used to emphasise that HIV/AIDS is a social problem that needs to be dealt with and not a taboo subject. In order to meet this goal, the following has to be achieved:

a) Educate children through the means of stories and testimonials from people all over the world, in order to present a full view of the epidemic;
b) Attempt to break the stereotypes surrounding PWAs, to reiterate that HIV cannot be transmitted through casual contact, and to consolidate relationships between PWAs and non-infected people;

c) Promote the usage of magazines and media, which will aim to present sex as a serious issue and will also discourage casual sex and sex without the use of protection;

d) Encourage people to ask questions before they engage in sexual intercourse and endorse honesty as a strong value. This will also be effectively linked to the holistic education system.

4. SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF DISABLED YOUNG PEOPLE

4.a. Introduction

Recently there has been much discussion, research, and legislation undertaken to tackle the issue of social exclusion of disabled people by governments, non-governmental organisations and United Nations organisations. The ideas proposed to tackle this issue will be focused towards direct action that the people in our committee, along with other young people, may take, as well as actions we believe should be taken on national and international levels.

4.b. Initiatives We Endorse and Actions We Want Taken on an International Level

Government policies and practices, legal frameworks, and public service providers must adopt an approach of equal access to all within their community. Equal opportunities, regardless of disability and vulnerability, must be central to development work. Disabled youth must be specified as a key target group in the social plans and educational programmes of their countries.

As the THIMUN Youth Assembly, we urge governments to make every effort to integrate disabled youth into mainstream schools. In the past, children and adults with disabilities have been 'casually integrated' into education, without receiving the special attention they need. Therefore it must be ensured that the extra attention needed is given in those schools that are intended to accommodate both able-bodied and disabled youth. This support can be in the form of:

a) Having facilities for people in wheelchairs;

b) Having individual tutoring for those that cannot follow normal lessons on their own;

c) Having lessons for the blind and deaf in Braille and sign language.

Recognising the enormous impact the mass media has on children and youth, we urge the media to include disabled youth in media designed to inform, educate and entertain the public. Thereby the pace of promoting tolerance and acceptance of disabled youth will be accelerated.

Various organisations (for example TakingITGlobal, Peacechild's 'Be the Change' initiative, Global Youth Action Network) exist which provide young people who are interested in creating change in their community with support, advice and links to funding to realise their ideas. These organisations can help us and other youth to set up initiatives which will tackle the issue of social exclusion of disabled youth in local areas. We urge governments and international organisations to support the existing organisations in extending their help to interested and motivated youth. Where they do not exist, we urge governments to set them up so that the youth in their community can receive the help they need to realise their plans.

4.c. Action We Will Take Towards Tackling Social Exclusion of Young Disabled People

The organisations mentioned previously (TakingITGlobal, Peacechild's 'Be the Change' initiative, Global Youth Action Network) should be encouraged to help youth understand the problems in their local areas - What are young (and older) able-bodied people's attitudes towards young disabled people? What are young disabled people's attitudes towards themselves and able-bodied people? Research could be undertaken through:

a) The administering of questionnaires designed to see if there is a problem;
b) The collection of experiences and ideas in our local schools, colleges, universities, youth groups and any young disabled people's groups;
c) The collection of any relevant research that has been carried out by any organisation or government attempting to tackle the issue.

When the respective problems have been analysed and understood, we will attempt to set up initiatives to address them. Any young people who wish to be involved in these initiatives or have ideas of their own can then come to the organisations mentioned above and receive guidance.

There are many different actions that we can take, either on our own, or with the help of these organisations:

a) Interacting with an individual who belongs to a particular excluded group (i.e. because of a certain disability) often breaks stereotypes and dispels fear. Initiatives will be taken which aim to bring young able-bodied and disabled people together, to interact in group outings;

b) We will encourage young disabled people to write stories and poems and create artwork that illustrate their life and feelings about the world. This can be done as a group activity in clubs, homes, and schools for disabled individuals. These creative works can then be distributed to both disabled and non-disabled young people to be read in class or in private, to promote understanding of their feelings and expressions. In addition, we will set up workshops in our schools and youth groups that stimulate discussion about the subject of the social acceptance of disabled people, and make use of fun activities aimed at further understanding the conditions of disabled people, breaking stereotypes, and promoting acceptance;

c) Many disabled youth do not realise that they will become disabled adults, and that they must eventually learn how to live as disabled adults in the future. Even when they do realise this, they often do not receive the guidance they need to become as self-sufficient as possible in the future. An example of a program that can form a basis for combating this problem is the 'big-brother/big-sister' program in the United States of America, in which young adults sign up to take care of and mentor younger, often disadvantaged, children that need special attention. Disabled young adults, or those who are knowledgeable of the everyday effects of certain disabilities, can sign up to take care of disabled children, by giving them the extra attention they may not receive at home and teaching them how to cope with daily life as disabled adults.

Some more ideas written by 19 year old Killian Parker, suffering from Cerebral Palsy, from The Irish Wheelchair Association

From an early age, it should be dealt with in schools not just pushed away. Like a friend of mine (who was disabled) said, a man said to him, "I will open this door for you" and he said "No, I'd like it if you just opened up your mind instead of just the door - that would be nice."

If some people just spent one day of their lives in a wheelchair, say a boss, and he had to go to a meeting and he had to find his way around, he would soon understand disabled people want to do everything else that you want.

It's the system, most times there are no ramps in places, and ramps are very important for older people also and everyone gets old. I'm afraid that's a fact of life.

Disabled people depend on their mother and father a lot, and this can at times make the family disabled and the children can have their mother's and father's points of view, and can't grow as people. So there should be some kind of Personal Assistance system sent out at a more early age (below 16) so that they can go out to wherever they want to. They are special and should never be treated badly, so just give them a chance that's all.

In employment for every 20 people employed, 3 should have some kind of disability.

Disabled people should have self-help of some kind, because it's important to work on their minds as well as their bodies.

It is very important to have youth groups that have activities that both able-bodied people and disabled people can do together. The problem is that able-bodied people at times intimidate disabled people; they do not want to be around able-bodied people, due to fear of being either discriminated against or more likely, the fear of being felt sorry for. There needs to be some kind of self development class to build confidence.

5. EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH

5.a. Introduction

Schools influence the course of any society, because education prepares students for integration into the community. Education is mainly focused on acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for employment. There is a lack of attention given to the development of moral responsibility in youth. Many social problems are reflected in schools: bullying, drug abuse, theft and vandalism. When young people leave school, they continue with this negative behaviour. Therefore, there is an urgent need to incorporate holistic education, where inspiration of the human spirit and the fostering of inherent human values form the foundation of educational systems world-wide. We encourage teaching values such as love for each other and the environment, self-respect, self-awareness, and independent thinking. These values should be integrated in classes and discussions, but should not be indoctrinated. We therefore support moral educational programmes such as those endorsed by UNESCO (see example on page 50).

5.b. Action to be Taken on the International Level

If holistic education were to continue to expand to schools around the world, the results witnessed in the given examples would become the norm. However, there are barriers to overcome, which must be discussed on an international and national level. Such barriers include a debate about what the correct values are and if they should be implemented. A school with a values charter should keep it under continuous review, so that teachers are comfortable in knowing that they are teaching what is widely supported.

There needs to be thorough research into the most effective ways to ensure that moral values are implemented in everyday life by the child, rather than just memorising the principles. It is important that an education system does not impose the values, but enables the young person to consider them independently, and come to their own conclusions. In this way the young person is more likely to develop sincerity and responsibility.

There is also the argument that academic excellence will be sacrificed if schools take the time to teach 'human' excellence. Paradoxically, academic performance has also been shown to improve when education is attentive to these values. This is because the child or young person is more confident and comfortable within themselves.

Education for right social development in this way would help to treat all problems created by man, as it deals with them at their fundamental cause. It would create a world society permanently free of the social troubles it faces now.

5.c. Actions We Will Take

(these plans include targeting young disabled people, and other excluded groups)

a) Endorse a more holistic education in our respective schools and countries whenever possible;

b) We will develop effective ways to awaken the moral values in youth. Peer influence in this way may be especially powerful. The youth can volunteer to help teachers initiate values programmes through after school activities and run workshops for our peers in our own educational establishments;

c) Through peer influence, we will attempt to help involve and inspire other young people to make use of all opportunities. This will help make the most of their passion and energy to create positive changes in their community and the world. This can be done through the organisations that give access to databases of opportunities.

6. CONCLUSION

The Youth Assembly is essential because it allows for the union of young international voices and opinions. This forum gives us the opportunity to influence the major global leaders to see the world's problems with a fresh mindset. As youth, we have the unique capability to both initiate these programs and mature along with them. As Sonia Johnson said: "We must remember that one determined person can make a significant difference; and that a small group of determined people can change the course of history."

Our philosophy for the Health and Social Development of Youth for 2002 is through educating youth physically, spiritually, and mentally in order to give them the skills and means to be active and informed future leaders. The problems that we have focused on deserve immediate attention both from youth and from world leaders. While the HIV prevalence rate in Africa and the social exclusion of disabled youth are both dire social ills, both can be remedied with the swift implementation of the actions proposed in this document. We hope that this action paper will not be the end of this initiative, but rather the spark that kindles the flame of revolution.

Example of a value education programme endorsed by UNESCO on http://www.sathyasaiehv.org.uk

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values

How does the Programme work?

It is not the purpose of the Programme to dictate the actions of the individual, but rather, to offer them a secure base from which they may arrive at their own informed decisions. The Programme seeks to draw out the basic human values of right conduct, peace, truth, love and non-violence, which are inherent in the fundamental make-up of the human personality. It is these eternal core values which raise man above the level of the animal kingdom and are indeed shared and recognised world-wide. Learning takes place through lesson plans based on practical, meaningful and fun activities using the five components:

Stories - about life, identity & relationships;

Quotations, poems and prayers;

Songs and music;

Silent sitting - exercises leading to inner calm and peace;

Activities, e.g. drama, discussion, games, role play, community service, etc.

In working through the lessons that comprise these components, the importance of the triple partnership for education becomes apparent: teachers will inspire children in their schools, if they are value-conscious adults; parents' example affects the conduct of their children; and children when reaching a certain age need self-discipline to balance their generally natural exuberance.

Examples of success:

The Government of Thailand have officially recognised the Programme and are sending teachers to observe the methodology used in the Sathya Sai School of Thailand. Over 14,000 teachers have been trained in the methodology of the Programme there.

A report from the Sathya Sai School of Zambia advised that they took the students who had failed their Grade 9 examinations and when they recently took their Grade 12 examinations, all passed, the majority with an A. In five years it has earned the reputation for being the best school in the country and the Zambian government want its methods to be adopted throughout the country.

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ACTION PAPER

"INSTABILITY IN LEAST ECONOMICALLY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES"

1. INTRODUCTION

The economic and social spectra of the globalization phenomenon generate both concerns and opportunities that are particularly pertinent to Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs).

This Action Paper explores youth opinion on the task of reconciling rapid economic expansion with the specific interests of LEDCs. The paper highlights the role of multilateral organizations and international financial institutions in the process of financing for development within LEDCs. It addresses debt relief in conjunction with outlining the domestic responsibilities inherent in this process. The paper stresses the need for cooperation between political, economic and social agencies and suggests long-term development and economic integration plans that take into account the LEDC perspective. The paper highlights a necessity for feasibility studies and vocational training and the establishment of a technological and educational infrastructure as a means through which LEDCs can fully participate in the process of globalization, whilst protecting their own domestic interests and fulfilling their economic, political and social potential.

A society is made up of a wide array of people with different cultures and religions. It is this diversity that allows for the possibility of a unified coexisting global society that functions as an amalgamation of pieces of the socio-cultural heritage. The key issues that are addressed in the paper are focused on the backbone of most cultures: language, religion and economy (national markets). The final issue focuses on the loss of cultural identity due to an imbalance in state decision-making. These are often influenced by the desire to suppress the antiquated economic policies of local cultures that believe in conservation and give power to those that support growth at all cost, usually parliamentary or other governmental figures.

Sustainable growth and development comes as the basis of an economy set on achieving global recognition. Thus, to maintain stability within and around a country, environmental considerations must be enforced. The economy requires tapping into natural resources and now restraints must be implemented. It is vital that governments give special attention to

environmental conditions so as not to harm the bio-diversity of their state, but also to provide agricultural capability to the population. Furthermore, environmental awareness can increase conservation, both from governmental figures and civil society. Plans involving the use of tradable rights have allowed for mediated levels of pollution, over-fishing, etc. Finally, a proposal has been developed to aid debt relief. The program involves exchanging financial debt for preventive/conservative measures for the environment in specific states

2. ECONOMIC ASPECTS

2.a. Overview

Money used to make the world go around. Nowadays it goes around the world in increasing amounts at higher speeds. Yet the world, and this Committee along with it, has identified that it doesn't go around everywhere. What have been defined as less economically developed countries (LEDCs) are missing out on that money-flow. Money seems to make money as well, so if there isn't any, there is a problem. There are a multitude of reasons for this and the Committee will try to touch upon most of them. The youth have to look further than the current establishment, so a structural multifaceted solution or path of progress is also proposed. Ensuring stability and more direct and efficient means of aid are paramount, detaching aid from the whim of creditors as well as credited governments. Efficient allocation requires attention and transparency in the form of media, as well as communication between those that know how to give and those that know where it needs to go.

More immediate concerns such as debt cancellation are discussed. Debt is a serious burden on LEDCs' economies. This has, more often than not, been caused by an irresponsible loan policy that failed to allocate money where it was most needed. While not trying to resolve the current situation, this Committee does envision debt relief to be an integral part of the solution in the future.

2.b. Economic Development - A Suggestion

An extensive and distinct economic development program must be prepared for each LEDC. This program will be designed so as to meet the specific needs of the country and to achieve economic development through the use of the resources available in that country. This program must stress the importance of national production in the sustainable

growth of the country. It is critical in the design of the program that International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the United Nations Organisations (UNOs) work in full cooperation with each other and the national governments, in order to design a program to suit a country. Three key issues that must not be overlooked in the process are as follows:

1. Equal representation in the IFIs will hopefully lead to impartial, centralized global creditors. Through this system, the conditions of the loans given to countries will be standardized and strictly monitored. In this way, the problem of debt cancellation in the future will be partially avoided.
2. The loans given to the LEDCs will be part of a gradual development program. The government will be asked to complete certain objectives before receiving one of several small loan packets. In this way, the foundations for sustainable, long-term development will be achieved, thus preventing the interference of short-term political instability in that country's economic growth.
3. It is often the case that the people living in LEDCs are hesitant about supporting a program designed solely by an institution and one which asks for compromises for economic growth. In some cases, the response to such involuntary 'Westernization' leads to social uproar and, once again, political instability. Thus, it is necessary to incorporate the local viewpoint in the economic program being designed. Economists and technicians from the LEDC in question must be included in the decision-making process since they are better able to analyze the problems and can give invaluable information to IFI professionals who may be not fully aware of the actual economic situation of the LEDC.

A goal of the economic development program must be to attract enough foreign investment by the end of the program to be able to survive in the global economy without aid or significant debt. Most LEDCs do not attract much foreign investment because of the risks involved for investors in countries with turbulent and unpredictable political and economic situations. Thus, political stability is vital for the establishment of a healthy economic development program.

The second step is the full utilization of resources such as land and labor. Feasibility studies must be made with the help of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) professionals. Institutions for vocational training must be designed in cooperation with the

International Labor Organization (ILO). The education system of the country should be redesigned though the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which would also lead to an increased employment rate and thus faster economic growth. The judicial system of a country should be revised to ensure the full rights and responsibilities of foreign investors. Additionally, national governments and UNOs should encourage regional trade and the profits from regional trade will help establish a respectable private sector and thus foster a competitive environment to lure foreign investors to the LEDC. UNDP, working in cooperation with the national governments, should establish an infrastructure in the LEDC, in order to achieve better living conditions and also prepare the ground for the private sector.

After the above steps are completed, mass media must work in cooperation with national governments to promote the risk-free economic conditions of a country, thus attracting foreign investment.

2.c. Transforming Economic Priorities

The new challenge of globalization is not to impede the expansion of global markets, but to find the rules and institutions for stronger governance. The Committee strongly believes that the principles of equitability and inclusivity should be actively pursued within the mechanisms of global economic governance, thus allowing those interests which are important to less developed countries to be pursued in addition to the interests of developed nations. The new challenge of globalization is to preserve the advantages of trade liberalization and competition, whilst ensuring that globalization works for people and not just for profits.

2.d. Global Governance & The Role of International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

The Committee recognizes the vital functions performed by inter-governmental economic institutions, including the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO), to be paramount in the current milieu of trade liberalization and global economic policy. However, current representative inequalities within many international financial institutions must be addressed in order to ensure equitable and inclusive global economic policy.

The Committee thus determines that:

- While the IMF and World Bank function in important fields, their voting systems heavily favor developed countries. The interests of developed countries consequently influence the policies and prescriptions of these organizations, thus contributing towards the marginalization of LEDCs within the structures and processes of global economic governance.
- A noticeable gap in the architecture of global governance is the lack of an overarching representative body to exercise oversight and give policy leadership on major economic and financial issues affecting the world. In the absence of such a body, this role has been largely appropriated by the G8, a private grouping of highly developed economies who represent a small and declining proportion of the global population. This unsatisfactory situation has been recently highlighted by the Commission of Global Governance in its 1995 report, "*Our Global Neighbourhood*", and by the UNDP Human Development Report of 1994, which called for an Economic Security Council within the UN. The Committee fully supports this suggestion, and further encourages equal vote weighting within such an inter-governmental body, were it to be established.

2.e. Development Requirements

The political and economic legacies of Western imperialism, combined with current downward pressure on commodity prices (the export base for most developing countries) and external circumstances, including reliance upon fluctuating aid contribution and protectionism among industrialized nations, have continued to inhibit economic expansion within LEDCs. As the causes perpetuating the economic disparity between wealthy and impoverished nations are clearly multifaceted, the Committee believes that only a multi-tiered approach (in conjunction with strong, equitable global governance) can lead to the inclusion of LEDCs within the global economy. The three-fold approach suggested by the Committee involves a solution to the debt crisis, the important responsibilities developed countries and intergovernmental organizations have towards the developing world, and the continuation of domestic efforts towards attaining economic and political stability.

Debt relief

The Committee is aware of, and supports, the Secretary General of the United Nations in his statement that debt relief is an integral step towards financing for development within LEDCs. Developing countries are burdened with unsustainable direct debt and interest repayment obligations which increasingly hinder their economic development and divert necessary funds from essential areas, including health and education. Although the Committee realizes that heavily indebted countries are obligated to demonstrate initiative and good governance on their own behalf, the negative impact felt by LEDCs due to debt is increasingly destabilizing. Thus the Committee encourages rapid and extensive debt relief and additionally suggests that heavily indebted countries investigate alternate avenues for debt relief, including credit lines, guarantee schemes and debt conversion through the International Development Association (IDA).

External/multilateral responsibilities

The contribution of developed countries, under the auspices of intergovernmental institutions, global agencies and the private sector, is essential in financing for development in LEDCs. The Committee is concerned by the recent decline in Official Development Aid (ODA) contributions from the international community, which would indicate waning global concern for the continuing economic and political plight of many LEDCs. A varied international approach towards LEDCs must involve partnerships with key actors in the multilateral system and strong partnership with the private sector. Beneficial involvement with the private sector, particularly in the form of foreign direct investment (FDI), must be preceded by microeconomic projects at a local level co-ordinated by multilateral bodies such as the UNDP. Such schemes would facilitate an investment-friendly environment and facilitate a greater level of self-sufficiency among LEDCs.

To this end, the Committee emphasizes the importance of the role of the UN in co-ordinating development and economic expansion measures within LEDCs, particularly through the UNDP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The Committee also acknowledges the role of all other multilateral organizations in assisting the integration of LEDCs into the global economy and the eventual goal of self-sufficiency and economic and political stability. These include the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Paris Club.

Removing LEDCs from the periphery of the global economy - domestic responsibilities

The Committee maintains that the need for democratic global arrangements that facilitate sustainable development and economic expansion within LEDCs does not in any way diminish the responsibility of developing nations to respect the need for the highest standards of national governance, in order to attain a level of political and economic stability conducive to improved development.

Domestic responsibilities entail that countries who seek equity, fairness, transparency and good governance in global arrangements should likewise work towards these principles within domestic arrangements. They should similarly aim to reduce national economic disparities and prevent economic and social benefits from accruing disproportionately. The Committee sees equitable wealth distribution as an essential step towards creating the consumers globalization requires for its own success. Domestic directives should be responsive to the needs of the people rather than imposed from above and evolved through consultation and democratic processes. Ultimately, the global response to the marginalization of LEDCs within the global economy and intergovernmental structures must complement and reinforce national efforts.

The Committee strongly believes that empowering and stabilizing domestic constituencies is the best mechanism for the removal of LEDCs from the economic periphery. As no unitary model for economic development or market participation exists, individual countries should exercise control over their own direction in the current milieu of economic globalization.

2.f. Efficient Resource Allocation

LEDCs should not be tempted by short-term stopgap loans. These will only amount to an insurmountable burden on the nations' economies. This results from proper revenue not being achieved due to misdirection of funds and a lack of knowledge and expertise on the side of the creditor and the credited. The centralized creditors should contribute to LEDCs economic development responsibly. Terms or demands should not be dictated merely by dominant economic thinking. There should also be room for the governments, domestic organizations and inhabitants of credited nations to advise on the proper spending of funds. This will combine intimate knowledge of a nation with existing economic expertise to

assure an optimum pool of knowledge on the sectors and areas in which aid is needed and the best way to distribute it. This will alleviate the tug-of-war situation that now often inhibits fruitful cooperation. More lenient and respectful cooperation will lead to a more flexible, dynamic and, ultimately, more effective distribution of funds. Nations will be able to get help themselves but not by themselves.

Furthermore, more long-term plans with consistent benefits need to be designed and executed. A more effective use of all nations' resources will be ensured. It will also contribute in a more effective way to the cultivation of new pools of economic resources. Acknowledging the differences in available resources in different nations and regions within nations, different and unique arrangements will have to be made.

Education and diffusion of knowledge are paramount. Centralized creditors will have to be informed and educated on the particulars of credited nations' economies and also on their culture and domestic situation. People in LEDCs will become ultimately responsible for making the loans work. These people need to be in potential direct communication with the centralized creditors and must receive proper education as an integral part of any financial aid project. This increased understanding of mutual economic and cultural philosophies will aid in anticipating problems and finding timely solutions. Educating inhabitants of credited nations will facilitate knowledge of effective economic policy, as well result in its diffusion.

2.g. Assessing Development to Countries' Needs

Once political stability is present, a thorough investigation internally and externally needs to be conducted as to a nation's existing and potential natural and human resources. Distribution of such resources is naturally extremely unequal around the world. Aid has to be adjusted accordingly, in order to develop sufficient resources to ensure a growing and sustainable economy.

2.h. Science and Technology

The relative lesser economic development of LEDCs is partially caused by a lower level of scientific and technological development. Four directly relevant fields are: farming technology, medical technology, multimedia technology and industrial technology. Besides direct aid, a portion of centralized creditor aid can be poured directly into technological developments particularly relevant to LEDCs, naturally including their input and specifications.

Inefficient farming methods yield insufficient cash as well insufficient subsistence crops. Furthermore it drives people to use increasingly large areas to grow these crops, leading to the familiar problem of deforestation. The cheap availability of older, more toxic, pesticides is also a serious threat to sustainability of various ecosystems located in LEDCs. Global agricultural subsidies, combined with proper training, will make more efficient farming methods available.

Modern medical care is only available on a marginal level in LEDCs. The availability of medicine for major diseases such as malaria and AIDS is limited. This is an extremely destabilizing factor within many economies and can hardly be helped by individual governments. Centralized creditors will also have to make provisions for direct medical care and training to inhabitants of LEDCs. Purchase and distribution of medicine is a point of great controversy at the moment, largely due to patents. Subsided development or simple acquisition by creditors will have to be combined with educational programs to diffuse awareness of major diseases. Development of medicine should at any rate not be inhibited or discouraged and it should be made readily available to those that need it.

Multimedia technology, radio, television and the internet are an invaluable tool in spreading knowledge and providing education. Proper equipment, which often entails being useful without the availability of electricity or batteries, needs to be made available at low prices. This has been partially achieved, but needs to be further stimulated. More advanced equipment, such as computers, are available on a large scale in economically developed countries (EDCs) - these can and should be provided in educational centers at the very least.

Industrial technology is most readily available to LEDCs through foreign direct investment, as well as investment by multinational corporations and other companies. This will increase as soon as stability and increasing prosperity, as well as an increasingly educated workforce, become available in LEDCs.

Science and technology, especially in the above areas, can become extremely beneficial to LEDCs. However, there should not be a massive dump of outdated knowledge and equipment. Instead, adjusted equipment, as well as a proper distribution network in the form of concentration in educational centers, will diffuse knowledge and use of the most relevant means of economic development.

3. SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

3.a. Overview

The world's six billion people are composed of unique groups with common identity in their social life, religion and culture. This makes every person special. This is because each individual is able to identify himself with a group within a specific geographical location.

Language, as a medium of communication in a globalized world, is being dominated by the economically developed countries (EDCs). For example, English is the most widely used language on the Internet. In this situation, globalization would compel some LEDCs to abandon their languages.

Furthermore, religious differences throughout the world are often the root of friction that arises between different groups. As globalization brings various religions into contact, it becomes imperative that these religious differences are resolved, especially between the developed nations, who are major players in globalization, and the LEDCs, who presently have little to say in globalization policies.

As globalization opens political, economic and social borders, the economically developed countries are involuntarily sending their culture mostly to LEDCs. Hence, as cultures come into contact, LEDCs are influenced by the EDCs.

3.b. Global Language - Bilingualism

A major and most obvious issue of globalization throughout the world is that of language. Many see globalization as standardization and this is especially apparent in this area, as the dominance of the English language as the language of global communication is ever increasing. Cultural identity is often directly related to, and in some cases derived from, the local language or dialect. In turn, cultural identity is the key for any nation that wishes to join the global community of international relations and economics. Throughout history the establishment of a nation of people, a nationality, was dependent upon a common bonding factor and in many cases this was language.

This issue is further pronounced by the evolution of information technology and mass media. The internet, global television and radio networks, email and other information transfer technology, have meant that globalization is seeing its greatest period of growth. These global networks of communication are largely conducted in the English language and so there is a pressure to adopt the global language. The integrity of particular languages is being eroded at a greater rate than ever previously seen in history.

Within a system of states defined by borders, the integrity of these national groupings is key to the maintenance of stability. Globalization brings increasing trade and communication between these states, which is made easier through a standard means of communication. The move towards a common language of communication is in many ways a very positive trend. It is also true that the evolution and mutation of a particular language is a natural and endless process that has been unfolding throughout history. However, the maintenance of cultural identity and the human need to maintain cultural roots is also very important. As language is an integral part of cultural identity, the pursuit of bilingualism is essential. This should be the goal of any nation and especially of LEDCs. We encourage bilingualism, as language is key for participating in the global economy, as well as for maintaining cultural identity. Specifically, educational curricula should include the teaching of the local language, as well as an 'international' language, appropriate to the area. Bilingualism is the most equitable solution for the pursuit of a global society in which difference and identity still exist.

3.c. Religion - Friction to Respect

Religion is another key component of cultural identity and many major conflicts have arisen throughout history over this single factor. In many LEDCs the personal link to family and religion is very strong. Although the definition of less economically developed countries encompasses a large spectrum, the importance of religion is constant for most. These aspects of societal life, religion, family and community are things that appear to be lacking or in decline in the Western developed nations. Currently globalization seems to encompass a set of ideals and practices that have arrived from the West. This leads to a feeling of threat within the LEDCs, which to some degree amounts to a fear of globalization. In many regions globalization is seen as a threat or an incursion upon religion.

After long periods of imperialism and colonialism, many LEDCs were left void of cultural identity. This void in identity has in many cases been filled by supposed 'religious fundamentalism', which gives structure, and identity to people that formally lacked direction. Religious fundamentalism is now the cause of many conflicts, internal as well as international. Globalization is a direct cause of this, as many who cling to their religious identity feel as though a Western model, established predominantly around the Christian religion, is being imposed upon them. These foreign ideals seem to be an incursion upon the integrity of their local religion. These tensions show themselves in the form of insurgencies, from protest to terrorism. These are the major issues faced by today's global society. Specifically, there is possibly an increasing divide between the Islamic world and the Judeo-Christian world.

These tensions stem from conflicts that have an unclear basis. With a widely gained understanding of religious difference and greater appreciation of religious practice, tradition and custom, this problem can be alleviated. This understanding is the key to the solution of this tension. The media through which this understanding and awareness can be achieved are many and varied. Promotion and programming needs to be released and spread via local and international media in its many forms, as well as in online forums. The tools need to include print media, broadcast media and the internet. The second strand that is important is education in other forms. Education in the beliefs of other religions needs to be included as an important part of a nation's educational system.

Also important is the need to reassure people of different religions that globalization is not something that is in conflict with their beliefs and practices. It must be made clear that religion is not a barrier to entry into the global economy or society, rather globalization is a process that moulds itself to existing practices and beliefs. Religious tension and conflict are broken down and prevented through increased understanding. The process of reaching an understanding is made up of religious education and promotion through mass media, together with a message of reassurance.

3.d. Culture - Preventing Involuntary Loss

With globalization comes the risk of cultural conformity, as Western culture often influences and overcomes the cultures of LEDCs upon economic contact. A government's decision to enter into and partake in globalized market economies is motivated by a desire to reap the potential benefits of globalization - i.e. increases in national wealth and in personal income. However, this economic assimilation very often leads to societal 'Westernization', as decisions to industrialize can not only deplete natural resources, but can also cause the involuntary loss of a population's cultural identity. For example, in Indonesia, a diverse cultural and ethnic mix is present, specifically in west Papua, which is inhabited by people who are very different in race and religion. The Javanese government has pursued economic progress to the detriment of the Papuans. Indeed, there is a fine line for LEDCs to tread between becoming globalized and remaining localized and it is when the imposed industry threatens the life of a culture that preventative measures must be taken.

As it is governments that decide to globalize the economy, it should also be the governments that quell the negative effects of that decision. In this context, it is a government's responsibility to ensure that the different cultural or religious practices within the nation are actively preserved, rather than swallowed up by 'Westernization'. In order to fulfill this responsibility, we suggest that governments, particularly those of LEDCs, incorporate the following few concepts into their practice - suggestions mild enough that they would not interfere with, or detract from, their economic endeavors. Firstly, we recommend that governments develop local and regional autonomies and make strides to encourage the limited self-rule of cultural groupings. Governments should provide support (both verbal and monetary) to the nation's separate cultures, urging them to continue their traditional practices and to identify with their ancestry. With such support,

a culture is allowed a niche within the nation and is granted the right to self-determination, despite the rest of the nation's rampant changes. Additionally, governments should work to achieve the preservation of cultures, not in a glass-jar but in an active form. The encouragement of cultural groupings fosters the continuance of traditional trades and practices, which the government should in turn support as a viable way for these cultures to participate in the nation's economy. Also, preservation occurs through the public spread of knowledge about a culture's traditions, practices, mores, etc.

There exists the very real threat that certain cultures in LEDCs will be overridden by the Western influences that accompany a globalized economy. However, there are actions that the governments of LEDCs can take, such as encouraging cultural grouping and preservation, that can prevent Westernization. Such efforts are in the government's best interest, considering the less desirable alternative - a possible loss of a valuable trade or product and an unhappy, disgruntled population. The key concept is that of regional autonomy, as with this, cultures have great control over their own destiny.

3.e. Society - The Role of Multinational Corporations

Multinational corporations are already a dominant part of the global economy, yet many of their actions go unrecorded and unaccounted. However, they must go far beyond reporting to their shareholders. They need to be brought within the framework of global governance, not just of national laws, rules and regulations.

Due to the activism of NGOs and other institutions of civil society, many multinational corporations are taking their social responsibilities more seriously. Codes of conduct have moved from vague promises to detailed rules, with the best codes now monitored by outside auditors. Especially now that the demand for social auditing - a thorough check on whether multinationals are living up to their social responsibilities (i.e. low cost vs. high quality, proper working conditions, child labor, etc.) - is on the rise, accounting firms such as Deloitte & Touche, PricewaterhouseCoopers and Ernst & Young are also carrying out social auditing. But multinationals should be socially responsible from the beginning, not only after having been caught neglecting responsibilities. Codes of conduct should also be developed for banks and financial institutions, covering secrecy and risk assessment.

Incentives and publicity can help. Awards and public recognition could be given to companies demonstrating exceptional performance in community partnership (i.e. local business enforcement), employee empowerment, gender equity, environmental stewardship, social mission and human rights.

However, multinational corporations are too important and too dominant a part of the global economy for voluntary codes to be enough. Globally agreed principles of performance are needed for:

- human concerns - to ensure compliance with labor standards and human rights,
- economic efficiency - to ensure fair trade and competitive markets,
- environmental sustainability - to avoid degradation and pollution.

Also needed is a global forum to bring multinational corporations into open debate with other parts of the global community - unions, NGOs and government. The results could be practical and positive. In the space of a few years, the fair trade movement and the promotion of fair trade products has gone from the margin to the mainstream in promoting labor rights and retail sales of fair trade goods are worth more than USD 250 million in Europe alone. This could be replicated at the global level in many ways.

4. THE ENVIRONMENT

The growth of biotechnology - a fundamental tool of globalization - has allowed for the creation of many environment-friendly proposals on methods of sustainable agriculture. For instance, the development of disease-resistant plants has allowed farmers to reduce the amount of pesticides and herbicides that they need to use. However, the advance of globalization has also plagued the environment with a great deal of negative effects.

Traditionally, economic trends have controlled environmental ones, because internationally, we exploit our resources and habitats for our economic gain. Now we are at a crucial point when the trends are beginning to reverse, as the environment will soon not be able to satisfy our economic demands. At our current rate of consumption, the outlook is grim. For instance, environment experts predict that if we continue at the present rate, there will be no tropical rainforest left in twenty to thirty years. We witness the social side effects of ruining of environment through health problems caused by pollution, soil erosion, etc. While internationally, we have begun to

examine and alter our reckless destruction, there are many steps still to be taken in order to preserve the resources and habitats that remain.

When the government of an LEDC decides to enter into the global market and move towards a more 'developed' state, it chooses to sacrifice the nation's natural resources for the sake of short-term economic prosperity. This action is a dangerous one for an LEDC, for it not only leads to the depletion of resources, but can also create a false sense of economic wealth. A prime example is Brazil in the last few decades. In an effort to 'develop' their rainforest basin, the government chose to build dams and roads and increase cattle ranching. Unfortunately, the construction costs have led to heavy loans from the IMF and the World Bank, and the products of these developments (electricity from the dams, lumber from the logging, etc.) have not even been of the same worth as the loans. Furthermore, the creation of roads has not increased development, but has opened up routes into the forest for the local lower classes, who are employing 'slash and burn' techniques. These practices only turn out two or three years of productivity and ruin the land for any later use. The economic benefits, therefore, are very short-term and extremely wasteful. There are similar situations in Africa, where grasslands are destroyed and soil is eroded by over-grazing. The intention is to create more efficient and profitable trade, but the result is that land is no longer arable and cattle become emaciated because of the disappearance of grazing areas.

This leads directly into some of the negative side-effects of environmental exploitation on society - as the amount of cattle becomes less and less (because of the decreasing availability of grazing space), the food per capita ratio skewed. As air pollution damages crops and the grain harvest product decreases, food consumption rates in Latin America and Africa have dropped noticeably. This has led to increasing infant mortality rates in those areas and is a direct indication of their nutritional needs. Such social side effects could lessen with the implementation of certain preventative measures. The Committee suggests the further establishment of tradable rights' schemes, as the precedents have proved successful. The obvious drawbacks are in the allocation of credits to companies, for such decisions are situational and cannot be bound by a standard formula. A second method of environmental conservation that has experienced success is 'debt-for-nature' swapping. Under such plans, the outstanding debts in LEDCs can be reduced and remaining natural resources and habitats preserved. The criticisms of such programs are that the debts of LEDCs are too large for any sort of reduction to be helpful,

and that there is infringement upon national sovereignty. However, despite the drawbacks, both programs constitute very viable possibilities to consider.

Another suggestion is that strides are made to reform the practices of NGOs like the World Bank, which are currently not accountable to anyone and therefore can bypass basic environmental regulations. Additionally, many experts believe that if subsidies promoting environmentally destructive practices were halted, such practices would have no means or funds with which to continue. There are many educational steps to be taken, such as teaching the local populations of LEDCs how to properly and safely use the resources around them, raising the awareness of international companies about their harmful behaviors, and proposing methods of tempering (and eventually eliminating) that destruction. If such measures are not considered and implemented, our global resources will be exhausted, our economic practices disrupted, and our social standards struck down.

5. CONCLUSION

Whilst globalization is not playful, it can easily be compared to a game. Globalization would be a good game to play - if it is played by the rules, it promises to be rewarding. This Committee has put forth some suggestions that by no means make the game less challenging or hard to play, but will assist those that cannot yet participate.

The ball has bounced around the field in three key areas: economy, society and culture, and environment. These are especially relevant to many of today's bench-sitters, LEDCs, that need to be helped out of the dugout.

Economically, this paper relies on, and also contributes to, politically and economically stable LEDCs. It aims to spur nations on much as a coach would, but most of the work still has to be done by the players. Furthermore strengths, in terms of resources, need to be built upon, while weaknesses need to be compensated to make 'team globe' work. Assistance, yet also initiative and respectful scrutiny of both, are very important. To ensure proper knowledge, to be able to participate, education continues to be extremely relevant.

Socially and culturally, every nation turns out to have a different style of play. These need to be preserved because every hurdle might need different strategies to overcome them. Yet people that do not want to play, and there are proper reasons for not doing so, should be protected -

nobody should be forced to play ball. Respect again is important - a lack of respect will lead to global foul play from all sides.

The environment, the playing field, has to be kept in good condition. Resources should be used and not abused. It is vital that experienced players share the means of doing so. The field has been dominated by a fraction of the globe for a long time. Protection for LEDCs is necessary, but so are opportunities to develop economically. Leverage should be given to all players, for instance in the form of tradable permits and 'dept-for-nature' schemes.

One can only hope to play a game properly for the enjoyment of all, to win even, with a full team. Globalization holds promises. The world has some recruitment to do.

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ACTION PAPER

1. INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Committee on Peace and Security in the Middle-East of the second annual session of the THIMUN Youth Assembly, with the intention of formulating a solution to the question of Israel and Palestine, representing the voice of THIMUN Youth, hope to see the implementation of the proposals and principles described in this action plan. These ideas have been guided and inspired by the principles of the United Nations and the best interests and expectations of the international community.

In this paper we have dedicated ourselves to finding peaceful and feasible means to create peace and stability in the region. We primarily focused on building trust between the two parties with the final objective of coexistence and the establishment of an independent and recognized Palestinian State.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

With the fall of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War, the present-day area of Israel, Palestine and Jordan came under the control of the British through the League of Nations. The Balfour Declaration, issued by the British Government in 1922, outlined British support for a Jewish homeland. The coming decade saw ever-increasing Jewish immigration, however this was met by Arab opposition and violence. In an attempt to stop this violence, the British restricted Jewish immigration. After the holocaust, sympathy with the Zionist cause reached a peak and the British, unable to deal effectively with the problem, handed its mandate to the United Nations. In 1948, the UN partitioned Palestine into two states, Israel and Transjordan, with Jerusalem being an international city. The Jews accepted this plan, but the Arabs did not. On the 14th of May, 1948, Israel declared independence and the following day war erupted between Israel and the majority of the Arab world. Israel survived and the areas that were to be Palestine came under the rule of Egypt and Jordan. In 1956 President Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal. Britain, France and Israel, in a trilateral offensive, invaded the Canal and Israel also occupied the Gaza Strip. Under international pressure, all of the acquired territory was withdrawn and the United Nations Emergency Forces (UNEF) moved into the Gaza Strip. On the 5th of June, 1967, war again broke out after Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran and requested the withdrawal of UNEF. Israel, claiming to be taking preventative action, occupied the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The Security Council passed Resolution 242(1967), declaring the

acquisition of land through war illegal and requiring Israel to withdraw to its pre-1967 boundaries. On the 6th of October, 1973, Egypt and Syria invaded the occupied territories. This attack was successfully repelled by Israel, which at the same time annexed the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights. The Security Council passed Resolution 338(1973) on this issue, declaring the annexations illegal. In 1973, the PLO was allowed to participate in the United Nations, but was not given a vote. In 1978, Egyptian President Sadat recognized the State of Israel and Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula under the 'land-for-peace' principle in the Camp David Accords. On the 8th of December, 1987, the first Palestinian intifada began. In 1993, Yasser Arafat recognized the right of Israel to exist, whilst Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin recognized the PLO as the representatives of the Palestinian people. On the 13th of September 1993, the PLO and Israel sign the Oslo Accords, providing for a 5-year transitional period and the election of a Palestinian Authority. Negotiations on the final-status issues were to begin no later then 1996. In September 2000, the second Palestinian uprising of the Al-aqsa intifada began and continues to this day.

3. TRUST-BUILDING IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE

3.a. Political Cooperation

The promotion of trust on a political and social level is instrumental in the final establishment of a Palestinian state, as it is the foundation on which two nations can live in peaceful coexistence. The following steps are vital, as they ensure the successful implementation of the action paper.

The Committee believes that the first and most vital step towards establishing trust is the cessation of violence in the short term. The Committee also notes that any intended cease-fire should take a carefully progressive approach by strengthening previous measures for cease-fire agreements. That is, aim for one violence-free day, then another, then three, then a week and so on. Realizing that governments have limited influence over terrorist organizations, the Committee understands that the following steps are idealistic, yet feasible, if the goal of lasting peace is kept in mind. Thus we believe that the following steps will ensure violence-free days, whilst at the same time giving the political leaders the necessary capital to stop the violence:

- both sides should reaffirm their commitment to all existing agreements,
- both sides should renounce terrorism and all acts of violence,
- the Government of Israel (GOI) and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) should resume security co-operation,
- the PNA should halt all involvement in the al-Aqsa intifada and urge all Palestinians to follow their lead,
- the GOI should freeze all settlement activities, including those considered to be 'natural growth' within the occupied territories, in accordance with international law,
- all of the measures discussed earlier must be implemented and the GOI must show the Palestinians that they are in control of the extreme settler population and the IDF,
- the PNA must conversely prove that is doing everything possible to control terrorist organizations,
- the PNA should arrest and detain all suspected terrorists, especially those involved in the murder of Tourism Minister Rehavam Zeevi,
- the GOI should stop its policy of 'targeted assassinations', its attacks on PNA facilities, and its besiegement of Yasser Arafat, and re-establish diplomatic ties in recognition of his authority,
- the PNA should prevent snipers using Palestinian territory to target Israeli citizens,
- the GOI should reinstate military police investigations into Palestinian deaths caused by Israeli Defense Force (IDF) actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in incidents not involving terrorism,
- the PNA should prevent Palestinian security officials from inciting, aiding, abetting or conducting attacks on Israeli targets,
- the GOI should release all Palestinians arrested in security sweeps who have no association with terrorist activities,
- PNA and GOI officials should identify flash points, inform each other of the names of security personnel, and share relevant information regarding that specific region,
- the PNA and GOI should ensure that IDF and Palestinian security officials assign more senior, experienced soldiers to flash points,
- the PNA and the IDF should train soldiers at flash points and other areas in non-violent methods of crowd control and broader peace-keeping methods, including the abandonment of the use of metal cored rubber rounds,

- any other means, agreed upon by both parties, that will contribute to the cessation of violence should also be implemented,
- the GOI and PNA should jointly endorse and support the work of Palestinian and Israeli NGOs undertaking cross-community initiatives,
- the GOI and PNA should sign an agreement ensuring the preservation and protection of all holy places sacred to Muslims, Jews and Christians,
- the GOI and PNA should, in joint conference, restate their belief in the two-state policy and acknowledge that both Israel and Palestine have the right to exist,
- the GOI should disband problematic settlements and increase in a favorable manner the ratio of areas deemed A, B and C, as defined under the 1993 Oslo accords,
- members of the GOI and PNA should engage in frequent dialogue and state meetings facilitated by a neutral body - at first in neutral territory and then in Israel or Palestine,
- allow those who work on the other side of the border to maintain their positions and cross the border with a security check in order to reach their place of employment,
- allow those who study on the other side of the border to cross into the neighboring state, having taken a security check, in order to reach their relevant place of study,
- the PNA should resume security co-operation with Israeli security agencies to ensure that Palestinian workers and students who are employed or study within Israel are fully vetted and free of connections to terrorists and terrorist organizations,
- establish a bus service between Tel Aviv and the Gaza Strip to enable families and cultures to meet and intermingle while living in separate states - this service would be strictly monitored by senior security personnel.

We understand that all cross-border activities require strict security measures so as to ensure the safety of the Israeli and Palestinian populations. Nevertheless, this Committee believes that cross-border activities are an integral part of trust-building measures that will eventually lead to peaceful coexistence.

3.b. Human Rights and Civil Liberties

When dealing with human rights, it is necessary to create a balance between the right of Israelis to security, and the right of the Palestinian people to be treated equally. The stigma of Palestinian citizens living within the state of Israel and the occupied territories as

'second class citizens' is a hindrance to the peace process. Thus, any attempt to improve the current situation must take into account human rights and civil liberties. This Committee believes that the following steps must be taken to guarantee the equal treatment, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of both societies living in coexistence:

- This Committee believes that Palestinians and Israelis should be granted equal rights in all territories. This will ensure that equal property rights, as well as equal education and employment opportunities, will exist in all territories.
- Treatment must be in accordance with United Nations guidelines with regard to those taken as prisoners by either side.
- Discrimination on all grounds must be condemned by both parties in order to promote not only awareness and tolerance, but also acceptance of different beliefs and practices. Within a society where several cultures must coexist, tolerance represents the foundation of any successful relationship.

3.c. Education:

Hand in hand with tolerance go mutual respect, appreciation and celebration of different cultures and traditions. An ideal of peace must be the driving force behind any agreement that is reached between the two cultures. Education needs to enforce this ideal. The guiding philosophy of this program is the promotion of dialogue before violence, which is essential to peaceful coexistence. In order for this ideal to be instated, we believe that education should be focused on preventing forms of xenophobia, racism, and other related intolerance. Education Towards Peace (ETP) - a joint committee which will be comprised of the Ministry of Education from Israel and the Palestinian Authority - will focus on the promotion of religious and cultural tolerance, an end to segregation, and the development of equal opportunities for Israelis and Palestinians. ETP will be integrated into schools across Israel and the occupied territories. We feel that the establishment of ETP will instill cultural respect and will promote peace to people through schools and other educational programs, so that it will become a strong, active idea throughout their lives. ETP will also train teachers and other educators so that they can convey the philosophy of the program to rural areas in both Israel and Palestine. We encourage organizations such as UNICEF to take an active role in the creation of public schools in the state of Palestine. The Committee hopes that through education, future generations will be able to coexist in a healthy and peaceful environment.

ETP will focus on its principles through the following:

- it will ensure that history and other social sciences focus not on biased material, but rather on concrete historical and social events in an objective fashion,
- it will educate teachers and other administrators on ways to implement the curriculum in an objective manner,
- it will regulate field trips and cross-cultural exchange programs that will develop relations between Israeli and Palestinian students,
- it will develop and encourage youth groups that will work on extra-curricular activities so as to promote peace and dialogue between the youth on either side.

3.d. Economics of Trust-Building

For the successful establishment and running of a state, there must be economic stability and a strong infrastructure. Economic stability in the occupied territories can only be developed with the help of financial aid. In order for this goal to be realized, the Committee proposes that the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or a committee established by the IMF, do the following:

- monitor how the Palestinian Authority allocates the funds allotted to it,
- advise the Palestinian Authority on how to allocate its finances in order to build the foundation of a stable economy and the basis for a strong infrastructure.

The Committee further encourages the support of both the Palestinian and Israeli economies by the international community. In order to monitor the proper use of funding and to secure finances against corruption, this Committee believes that those officers accused of corrupt behavior be tried in an International Court. This will ensure that corruption within the judicial system does not affect the financial aid given to the country.

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE

4.a. Geography/borders of a Palestinian state

We, the Committee on Peace and Security in the Middle East, propose the creation of a Palestinian state within the borders of the Israeli State. Our proposed state is one that would consist of two territories: the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Our decision on this issue was based on the fact that most Palestinians live in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There will not be lasting peace in the region if a separate state is not established. A state's sovereignty is based on territorial independence, which can only be ensured for the Palestinian State if Israel withdraws its troops from the occupied territories. Security measures that should be taken after withdrawal of these troops are specified in another section of this paper.

The building of Israeli settlements in the new Palestinian State should stop immediately, as it will be up to the Palestinian government to make decisions on their infrastructure concerns. Just as Palestinians have the right to live in Israel, Israelis will have the right to live in Palestine with Israeli citizenship. The Palestinians will grant the Israelis the right to travel freely within and out of the territory of Palestine.

There will be a highway constructed during the rebuilding of their infrastructure that will run between the two separate Palestinian territories. This will allow the Palestinians to travel to and from each territory freely. Public transportation services will also be available, and new routes established.

In the past, natural resources have been distributed unevenly, as seen with the water supply from Lake Tiberias. This situation will no longer be a concern once an even distribution of resources has taken place. In addition to a more even distribution, we suggest the building of desalinization plants to serve the Palestinian economy, increasing the accessibility of water to the rest of the nation. This Committee proposes a plan for water distribution that is analogous to the agreements between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt over the Nile River, in which an even distribution took place based on economic, geographic and population concerns.

The situation in Jerusalem should be resolved by both sides accepting a compromise. This Committee believes that the fundamental hindrance to peace in the Middle East is the issue of Jerusalem. Thus, we believe that Jerusalem should be turned into an international zone, monitored neither by the GOI nor by the PNA, but placed under the mandate of the United Nations Trusteeship Council. Although this Committee recognizes the problems associated with this solution, we strongly believe that this is the best possible way to dispel the tension within Jerusalem. We also propose the creation of a ruling committee, with equal representation from both the Palestinian and Israeli parties, that would help formulate the legislature that will be used to run Jerusalem. Civilians within the city will continue to have access to religious sites and will be able to continue with their employment and education within Jerusalem.

4.b. Government

Once the Palestinian border has been established, a government must be created so that the new state can have a vote on multilateral issues. The PNA, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, is a transitional government created for the purpose of establishing an independent Palestinian state. Following the establishment of a Palestinian state, free and fair elections should be held as early as possible under the auspices of the United Nations. The newly created government will then be based on the votes of the Palestinian citizens. We recognize that the Palestinian State is a new concept and thus it is plausible that the government would lack experience. It would be beneficial to them to be given aid and guidance by designated United Nations officials, in the form of objective observance and aid in the formation of legal mechanisms.

4.c. Economic/foreign aid

Economic and foreign aid is crucial to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Such support can only be expected if the Palestinian and Israeli states co-operate to improve the current situation. Both financial aid and support in the form of legal, medical, and other expertise, are necessary.

Primarily, all nations and international organizations are urged to help the Palestinian State by providing financial support. This support could be in the form of monetary loans and funds, which are especially pertinent to the creation and maintenance of the infrastructure described below. It will also be necessary for the development and maintenance of

education and healthcare services, civil services including fire and police departments, hospitals, and housing complexes. The UN is also encouraged to aid the establishment of education and healthcare systems by sending volunteers to assist in the set-up and running of the services.

4.d. Infrastructure

Following the establishment of a Palestinian state, this Committee believes that one of the primary goals will be to ensure the maintenance and modification of the current infrastructure, while at the same time creating a more modern one. When the new state is founded, the transition for its citizens should be as smooth as possible. This would imply that the upkeep of currently used infrastructure must continue. This continuance must encompass all aspects of the Palestinian infrastructure from power plants, public transport, access to roads and water-passages, telecommunication cables, and water reservoirs, to provision of fresh water via the pipelines. A modernized infrastructure is a vital component in the raising of a people's living standards as well as increasing foreign investments and businesses. The creation of modern structures, such as desalinization plants (which can alleviate the struggle for water), schools, hospitals and governmental buildings are necessary and essential improvements. These efforts are by no means inexpensive, which is why we have mentioned their funding in the previous paragraph. Since Palestine will be created from a land filled with mostly Israeli infrastructure, there must be a transfer of authority from Israel to Palestine. Palestine will then be responsible for the upkeep of its own infrastructure. The maintenance could be funded through the establishment and implementation of a taxation system in Palestine. The Palestinian provisional government should employ personnel who would begin the process of getting acquainted with current budget issues. Israel is to continue the provision of the services of their experts in the field of income tax, in order to ensure a smooth transition and an effective, functioning taxation system. As Palestine uses its infrastructure to improve the state of its economy and the livelihood of its citizens, it will gradually raise the funding needed to create a more modern infrastructure.

4.e. Security assurances

The Committee believes that the primary reason for the failure of previous attempts to create a lasting peace between Palestine and Israel is due to the lack of trust between the two countries. In order for there to be peace in a time of tension and fear of military retaliation, there must be trust in a country's safety. When Palestine is made into an independent state, security assurances must exist, in order to ensure that potential threats of war are minimized, not only for Palestine but for Israel as well. We think there are several measures that must be taken to ensure such peace. First and foremost, we would like to propose the creation of a one kilometer-wide buffer zone between the Israeli and Palestinian border. United Nations Peacekeeping Forces would secure this area and carry the responsibility for defense against external threats, while joint Palestinian and Israeli military police forces will be given the task of patrolling the main roads and railways in the buffer zone linking the two borders. These police forces are to uphold public order and will have the authority to handle incidents in which both Palestinians and Israelis are involved. They will be in uniform and carry their police identification at all times during duty. The police department of both Israel and Palestine must notify the UN of the names of the every policeman, of the license plates of all police vehicles, and the type and serial numbers of any arms used in this buffer zone. The presence of the UN Peacekeeping forces is to minimize the likelihood of an attack from Palestine on Israel or vice-versa. Should they have a desire to do so, Palestine and Israel may establish military posts, border patrols, and police and early warning stations, in order to monitor troop movements and to act as a purely precautionary defensive force. There will be no military buildings or any troops with arms in the buffer zone at any time. Nevertheless, the citizens of Palestine and Israel should be granted the right to move freely between the two countries. This could perhaps be facilitated through the creation and usage of identification papers, shown at the border control. Through the existence of the buffer zone and the presence of UN forces within it, we believe that there is far less chance of attempted Palestinian or Israeli border expansion as a result of defensive insecurity for the further inland settlements. The fear that one side will overtake the land of another before the latter does the same should eventually disappear completely through the intervention of the armed UN troops. Over a period of time (approximately 50 years), as the Middle East situation becomes more stable, the Peacekeeping forces will very slowly diminish. This Committee also thinks that such a gradual decrease in army size would be beneficial in reducing tensions on the Palestinian and Israeli borders. We consider that this curtailing of the army size and the restriction of

its purpose (i.e. to act as a purely defensive force within, but not outside, the country's borders) can almost single-handedly ease the pressure, allowing its citizens to enjoy peaceful and more prosperous lives.

We also believe that a system of monetary incentives and penalties imposed on Israel and Palestine would be successful. If each country implements policies to co-operate to achieve actual peace, they could be rewarded with financial donations or with long-term loans, which could be used to promote their economic status. On the other hand, if the country is actually attempting to cause trouble or refuses to comply with the policies it has signed, it could be penalized. This could be done by excluding them from financial donations and perhaps through even harsher penalties in the form of temporary trade sanctions.

4.f. Post-establishment of Palestine

Reports from Palestine and Israel concerning the establishment of a transitional Palestinian state

Following the establishment of a transitional Palestinian state, reports shall be requested from both the Palestinian and Israeli governments. These reports shall be submitted every six months for five years, after which they shall be submitted on a yearly basis.

The purpose of these reports will be to assist the United Nations and the international community in analyzing the effects of the newly established Palestinian State from both Israeli and Palestinian perspectives. These reports will also be submitted to a specially formed panel of the United Nations designed to evaluate the status of Palestine and the development of its international relations. The reports of the two states shall include in depth evaluations on the following aspects of Palestine:

- Economy: Reports on the economy of Palestine should include, but not be limited to, an analysis of Palestinian economic growth and stability. Specific topics include employment rates, trading status and relations, Palestinian Gross Domestic Product (GDP), per capita GDP, and distribution of wealth and the workforce. The Israeli report will offer an outside perspective on the strengths and international effects of Palestinian economic activities. The Palestinian report will highlight the economic status within their state.
- Security: Security issues and concerns of both nations should be expressed in their reports. The reports should concentrate on Palestinian military action and presence

and outline the nation's stance on this issue. In the event that either side initiates violent actions during this time, both sides should include in their report an accurate summation of the action and provide as much relevant information as possible. While the Palestinian report should focus on their own military presence and roles, the Israeli report should have a greater focus on how the newly formed state is utilizing its military and how it relates to Israeli security issues.

- Education: A report on the status of education in Palestine shall be compiled to evaluate all levels of education within the newly formed state. An analysis will be made on the availability of education, as well as the Palestinian school curriculum. The analysis of the availability of education in Palestine will focus on the increase of education in less developed regions, as well as the education of those Palestinians formerly unable to attain education due to unfortunate circumstances or geographic location. The Palestinian curriculum will be evaluated on the level of objectivity, comprehensiveness, and basic standardization throughout the state at lower levels. The Palestinian education system shall be evaluated in comparison to acceptable international standards of higher education.
- Government: The condition and effectiveness of the Palestinian government should undergo self-examination as well as analysis by the Israelis. If the government is suffering from any infrastructure or stability problems, this should be assessed in the report. The power of the Palestinian government to represent the voting population should also be assessed by both states.
- Resources: Because Israel and a new state of Palestine may have disputes over resources, it is also necessary that both states include in their reports the status of resource-sharing, with a specific focus on sharing water. These reports should outline the problems and a propose solutions to cooperatively remedy the problem.

Reports from Palestine and Israel concerning the relations between the two parties

The reports from Israel and Palestine on the condition of the newly formed state of Palestine shall also include a separate section focusing on the development of relations between the newly formed Palestinian State and Israel. These reports shall include information and statements regarding the following points:

- Land and water disputes: Reports will be submitted evaluating any land or water disputes between the two states. Any conflicts concerning land or water will be

assessed. As both sides will be compiling reports, the Israeli and Palestinian perspectives will be available for further evaluation.

- Further diplomatic cooperation: The Israelis and Palestinians are also responsible for including in their reports a description of how their respective governments have worked together to promote political and social cooperation between them.
- Border control: The newly established borders between the states of Palestine and Israel shall be monitored by each nation and any issues or concerns regarding these borders shall be presented in their reports.
- Trade: Evaluations of the trade status and relations between Israel and Palestine will be submitted. Analysis will be made on any agreements or hindrances affecting trade.

United Nations report on the status of a newly established state of Palestine and Palestinian-Israeli relations

In addition to the reports submitted by Israel and Palestine, a committee shall be formed within the United Nations to produce a report giving an international assessment of the newly formed state of Palestine, as well as its relationship with Israel.

The report shall cover the materials present in the separate reports previously submitted by Israel and Palestine and shall include information concerning the status of displaced persons in Palestine and Israel.

The Israelis and Palestinians shall use this report as a basis for decision-making in future agreements and negotiations, as it will incorporate the ideas and assessments from the individual reports submitted respectively.

The committee of the United Nations shall be designated as the United Nations Committee for Palestinian and Israeli Relations and shall have the necessary monitoring powers to produce the aforementioned analysis on Palestine and Israel.

Education Towards Peace

We, as a youth, feel that education will bring alternatives to violent acts and cultural intolerance to the peoples of the Middle East. Education is the key and should be focused on preventing forms of xenophobia, racism, and other related intolerance. This will instill cultural respect and will promote peace to people through schools and other programs, so that it will become a strong and active idea throughout their lives. This Committee believes that the establishment of an educational program towards peace, ETP, will ensure the above. ETP will be integrated into schools across the Middle East and will also be promoted through the media. We, as a youth, feel that the media must be used in order to spread awareness and accessibility of ETP. To make the programs, ideas, and information of Education Towards Peace more accessible, ETP will start campaigns to create this awareness. ETP will be put into action in the rural areas where schools and media are unavailable through the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. ETP will emphasize the path of non-violence, peace, and cultural tolerance. This program will help resolve the conflicts of Israel and Palestine internally, so that the people of the Middle East will not feel the need for acts of violence externally. As youth, we are concerned that the present education systems are not implemented with enough cultural tolerance and that cultural intolerance usually results. This intolerance leads to violence and hatred. In order to promote peace successfully, cultural tolerance must be instilled in the individual. We realize that this is a difficult task and that it takes time to bring peace to the hearts and minds of each individual, but through education it can be achieved.

ETP programs

ETP programs will focus on the development of awareness and cultural tolerance. For instance, it will have courses to specifically educate people of their human rights. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been displaced in the Middle East and are living under harsh circumstances. These people, along with the rest of the Middle East, have to be educated about their human rights, to ensure that they are maintained and not violated.

We, as the youth, believe that, in order to promote understanding and respect between cultures, history must be taught in a non-biased way, specifically by being objective about historical events. It is difficult to build tolerance towards another culture if history is taught from a one-sided point of view. In order to minimize bias in teaching, ETP, as a neutral

body, will conduct programs to educate teachers on how to conduct a class without bias. To ensure objectivity in education programs, ETP would make recommendations to both sides on the content of their curricula. This also ties in with the problem of propaganda and censorship in the educational system. ETP will urge governments to end propaganda and censorship within education and elsewhere, because it takes away a person's right to the free development of opinion and cultural tolerance.

Youth group exchange and connections

ETP will set up youth groups to develop connections and relations between Israeli and Palestinian youth, in order to build bridges and create cultural tolerance and a common road to peace. These youth groups will focus on building relationships and fostering dialogue, in order to humanize the countries in conflict through various activities. This will create understanding and respect for each other's cultures. The friendships and respect developed through these youth groups will hopefully prevent people from turning to acts of violence. Through these connections, new ideas for peace will be formulated and put into action by the youth. We, as the youth, feel that developing good relations amongst youth is essential in instilling the idea of peace within the individual.

Unemployment:

As unemployment in Palestine has escalated to roughly 50%, we, as the youth, feel that this issue must be resolved in order to sustain peace and security in the region. We believe that people who are economically stable through employment are less likely to provoke social conflicts. In order to increase employment, we feel that it is imperative that Israel lift its employment restriction on Palestinians. This will further develop the Palestinian economy and promote stability within the state.

We feel that the encouragement of the newly formed Palestinian State to provide and create jobs will sustain the livelihood of its people. This can be accomplished through the development of jobs in infrastructure within the state. Through the creation of these jobs and the improvement of the infrastructure, the economy will be strengthened, thereby further increasing job opportunities and helping reduce unemployment. The encouragement of foreign and domestic investment into the private sector would further stimulate employment within Palestine.

Along with employment, the Palestinian labor force requires workers' rights. We encourage Israel to take measures to create equal working conditions for Palestinian workers within the state of Israel.

5. CONCLUSION

The Committee's final recommendation is concerned not with the formation of a Palestinian state, but rather with the effect the current conflict has had on the future of the region - the youth. The Committee believes that a fact-finding committee should be created to deal specifically with the effects of the current situation on the youth of Israel and Palestine. This committee, made up of representatives from around the world of different ages, should report back to the PNA and GOI. We believe that, if not for any other reason, the detrimental effects of the current situation on the future of both sides should be enough to persuade people of the need for a comprehensive, fair and lasting peace.

The issue of peace and security in the Middle East is arguably the hardest problem to solve in international affairs. Nevertheless, this Committee believes that the above recommendations are crucial for the most important problem in the Middle East - the Palestine question - to be solved. Ultimately it is up to the two sides involved to make the necessary sacrifices for peace. History and geography have ensured that Israel and Palestine are neighbors, therefore their future is intricately linked and they will lie and prosper in peace or die in conflict together.

COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT AND DEFENCE

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ACTION PAPER

1. INTRODUCTION

As the youth of the world, we recognize that the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is the best way to ensure global security. Nations and peoples have the right to a safe existence. Equally, nations reserve the sovereign right to defend themselves against perceived threats, in order to ensure their national security. However, the methods and procedures employed by nations to exercise this right to defense are often perceived by other nations as offensive measures. This is the defense dilemma. We recognize that the defense dilemma is inescapable, thus making the total disarmament of WMD an unrealistic goal at the present time. Therefore, we propose the implementation of a solution based on partial disarmament of nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional weapons, through confidence-building measures and multilateral weapons reductions.

In 1945, scientists working on the Manhattan Project introduced the world to the nuclear bomb, a weapon whose full strength surpassed all imagination and whose destructive forces have the power to wipe all life off the face of the earth. Today, we must deal with the consequences of the technology that human intellect has developed. Our human nature must be equal to our human intelligence - we must not allow our basest desires to control our reactions. It is because of the fear that such weapons produce that we, representing the voice of youth, solemnly dedicate ourselves toward peace and security, through the idealistic goal of complete and total disarmament of nuclear, biological, chemical, and illicit small arms. However, we also realize that this is an unrealistic dream, at least at the present time. Today's world has an intimate relationship with the weapons within it, and people are inexplicably unable to separate themselves from the destruction and chaos that such extensions of our nature produce.

Weapons have held a place within society ever since the dawn of human civilization. They have been used as tools to hunt, to fish, and in general to sustain the life of the human species. Unfortunately, weapons quickly outgrew this role and fulfilled one of murder. War and conflict remain an illogical part of humanity - we continue to destroy each other's lives with bloodshed. The need for defensive measures arose out of this mentality. Communities banded together to form larger groups and placed walls along their borders to protect themselves from foreign 'threats'. They set themselves apart from other groups and unnecessary fear and confusion began to ingratiate itself. We have not yet grown out of this way of life - today, people are just as

apprehensive of different groups, nationalities, and peoples as they were at the beginning of civilization. However, the threat has become much more omnipresent. A single accidental launch by a nuclear power would start a chain reaction that would destroy life. That humanity lives so close to the brink of its own destruction is a rather ignored quality of everyday reality. It poses a defense dilemma: a nation feels that it must defend itself against other nations, while at the same time hoping for a world without arms competition or nuclear warfare. Nations have long debated the extent to which one must move either toward defense or toward disarmament. Because of this, we, the youth, although regretful of the place which nuclear weapons hold in society, nonetheless hope that limited disarmament can be accomplished. We believe that through the reduction of arsenals and multilateral confidence building, the world should become that much safer. An arms race may be necessary for the survival of a dying economy; however, with every weapon produced, we come that much closer to the obliteration of our species.

2. NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND NUCLEAR DEFENSE

2.a. Introduction

The Committee for Disarmament and Defense proposes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons and abandonment of the US National Missile Defense (NMD) program should be the ultimate goal of the international community. However, given the current political reality, it is unlikely that NMD will be abolished and total nuclear disarmament achieved. Therefore, we propose a program of confidence-building measures and multilateral arms reductions to achieve at least partial disarmament.

2.b. The role of NMD in nuclear disarmament / why NMD should be abolished

Since the US proposed system is arguably one of the most important disarmament developments in 2001-2002, it is crucial to address this issue when talking about nuclear disarmament. NMD is a proposed system of radar and guided missiles intended to counter the new perceived threat to US national security, i.e. nuclear attacks from 'states of concern' such as North Korea, Libya, Iran and Iraq.[1] President Bush currently intends to

[1] A National Security Strategy (NSS) for a New Millennium, Section II, subsection 'Threats to US Interests', point cited in Federation of America Scientists (FAS) website, http://www.fas.org/man/docs/strategy97.htm#threats, 15/10/2000

deploy a *comprehensive* missile defense - a land-, sea-, air- and space-based system with the ultimate capacity to destroy approximately fifty warheads.[2] The deployment of such a defense will, however, be detrimental to international nuclear arms control measures such as the ABM Treaty.[3] The ABMT prohibits the USA and the Russian Federation (RF) from developing an anti-ballistic missile system capable of protecting either country's *entire territory* from a nuclear attack,[4] thus assuring the vulnerability of both states to each other's strategic nuclear missiles (rational deterrence theory - RDT). The deployment of an NMD with the potential to destroy the RF's retaliatory capability would therefore constitute a *fundamental breach* of the ABMT.[5]

Moreover, because the ABMT facilitated the modern system of international accords on arms controls and disarmament, its abrogation would also undermine these agreements,[6] for example, START I and II and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). With weakened nuclear deterrents, the RF and China will be encouraged to increase their nuclear stockpiles,[7] place multiple warheads on their existing missiles,[8] export nuclear technology to non-nuclear weapon states[9] and, in so doing, incite nuclear proliferation and an arms race in Asia and the Middle East.[10]

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[2] Phase 'C3': planned to be in operation around 2010-2015; incorporates around 250 interceptor missiles spread over two sites: Alaska and North Dakota; designed to intercept up to 50 warheads with more complex counter-measures such as decoys. Wilkening, Dean (Spring 2000) "Amending the ABM Treaty", Survival, v42(1), pp 31-32

[3] The Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABMT-1972); signed as part of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty 1972 (SALT I) Interim Agreement: The Interim Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT I - interim agreement); cited in Goldblat, Jozef (1994) "Arms Control: A Guide to Negotiations and Agreements", Sage Publications: Cambridge, pp385-387

[4] ABMT; Article I (2) "each Party undertakes not to deploy a ABM system for a defence of the territory of its country..."

[5] Mendelsohn, Jack (Spring 2000) "The Impact of NMD on the ABM Treaty", Lawyers Alliance for World Security White Paper on National Missile Defence, chapter IV, p28

[6] Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties I (1991) and II (1993) III (yet to be negotiated)- (START I, II & III), Non-proliferation Treaty 1968 (indefinitely extended at the 1995 NPT Review Conference), Missile Technology Control Regulations, Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (yet to be fully negotiated) http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/acda/treaties/inf2.htm source: Ivanov, Igor (Sept/Oct 2000) "The Missile-Defence Mistake", Foreign Affairs, v79(5), p15

[7] Cirincione, Joseph (Spring 2000) "The Asian Nuclear Reaction Chain", Foreign Policy, Issue 118, p125

[8] Vladimir Belous, "Key Aspects of the Russian Nuclear Strategy" in Security Dialogue, vol 28(2), p163

[9] Butler, Richard, "Restarting the Nuclear Race", New York Times, May 2 2001, p19

[10] Cirincione, Joseph, "The Asian Nuclear Reaction Chain", op cit, p126

2.c. Youth goals: total nuclear disarmament

Given the detrimental effects that a comprehensive NMD would have on international nuclear arms control and the continued threat nuclear arsenals pose to our existence, the ideal solution is the abandonment of the NMD proposal in line with a global program for a gradual elimination of nuclear weapons. This program of phased nuclear disarmament was developed by the Canberra Commission in 1996. It requires several necessary phases, as well as the strict compliance of all nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states. The program includes the gradual reduction of nuclear arsenals and, most importantly, an effective multilateral verification system to check any signs of unregistered or undeclared nuclear activity. Most importantly, the program ensures that no states feel that the nuclear disarmament process is a threat to their security.[11]

Phase One should consist of several immediate steps and be primarily led by nuclear weapon states, who should set an example and give weight to their commitment to eliminate nuclear weapons. One of these steps would be to take nuclear forces off alert and remove warheads from delivery vehicles. Both of these steps would reduce the chance of an accidental or unauthorized launch and would serve as a confidence-building measure (CBM) between nations.[12] A further step would be to end nuclear testing. This would inhibit the further technological advancement of nuclear weapons. Reductions of nuclear arsenals would also be included in this program, for example in the form of the START III. Lastly, an agreement among nuclear weapon states on a 'no first use' policy would serve as an additional CBM.

Phase Two should be implemented once the obligations of Phase One have been fulfilled. It would include the prevention of further horizontal proliferation and a verification program. If all states were to enter the NPT, then horizontal proliferation could be prevented. The verification program should have the capacity to detect any country's attempt to cheat the disarmament process. This includes the monitoring and inspection of nuclear facilities and the implementation of universal safeguarding measures. This program should be pursued in cooperation with such organizations as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It would also require a high level of commitment from all

[11] Canberra Commission, p51
[12] Ibid, p53

states to the effective enforcement of a verification system. The verification system must also take possible threats, such as nuclear terrorism, into account.[13] With the verification system in effect, countries will be able to dismantle their nuclear weapon infrastructure.[14]

Once the preceding steps have been properly introduced, multilateral agreements could then focus on the final elimination of nuclear weapons and confidence building through continued verification. Ideally, there will be a requisite degree of global transparency and trust to achieve our vision of a nuclear weapon-free world.

3. CURRENT POLITICAL REALITY

Despite fresh criticisms, US policy makers are likely to use the present climate of fear in the USA to bolster all defensive systems, including counter-terrorism measures and NMD.[15] Although President Bush is unwilling to abandon the deployment of a comprehensive NMD, we propose that it may be possible for the US to pursue NMD, while at the same time upholding international nuclear arms control regimes through nuclear arms reductions and confidence-building measures consistent with the Canberra Commission's recommendations. Initiating and strengthening such measures would preserve Russia's and China's nuclear deterrents and reassure both nations that the US is not trying to increase its first strike capability against them.

3.a. Our suggestions for confidence building

The US and the RF should reaffirm and strengthen the confidence building and risk-reduction measures taken during and after the Cold War.[16] These include:

- increasing communications,[17]
- ensuring compliance with the Prevention of Incidents at Sea (INCSEA) Agreement (1972),
- notifying each other of missile test firings,[18]

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[13] Ibid, p63
[14] Ibid, p62
[15] Douglas Firth, US Undersecretary of Defence; JD Crouch, Assistant Secretary of Defence quoted in York; op cit. Sheridan, G (Foreign Editor), "US should now take careful aim" in The Australian, Thursday 13 September 2001, p19; Gow, D, "BAE Soars on sales hopes: defence; Most military budgets expected to rise", in The Guardian, 14/09/01, sources: World Reporter
[16] Nuclear Risk Reduction Centre (1987), Prevention of Nuclear War Agreement (1972), Cooperative Threat Reduction (Nunn-Lugar Program)
[17] Hot-line Agreements, Accidents Measures Agreements (1971)
[18] Ballistic Missile Launch Notification (1988)

- exchanging data,[19]
- providing for reciprocal visits of military officials, for example to former deployment sites, or joint scientific experiments on mutually-relevant issues, such as warhead elimination,[20] which would help provide reassurance that multilateral verifications are being implemented,
- conducting joint military and defense planning,[21]
- implementing a Joint Warning Center with Russia and enhancing Russia's deteriorating early warning network[22] direct feed from US warning satellites or a joint global US-Russian warning network are some options to explore;[23]
- the US should also remove all weapons it would destroy under START III from high alert,
- the US should keep its strategic nuclear forces targeted off Russia.[24]

The US and China should implement similar measures. While they have taken tentative steps towards some of them, the US and China have not done enough to construct more meaningful accords and enhance existing ones.[25] While the Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (January 1998) is an encouraging first step, the Agreement should be made as comprehensive as the original INCSEA Agreement. Specifically, the INCSEA Agreement stipulated that each side should refrain from 'simulating attacks' against the other. Such restraints would help lessen the risk of misconstruing the other side's intentions, particularly in the Taiwan Strait flashpoint.[26] Moreover, building on The Hotline Agreement (May 1998), both the USA and China could construct nuclear risk-reduction centers in both countries, in order to enhance diplomatic communication channels during times of crisis and facilitate other crisis-reduction data exchanges.[27] Despite the Nuclear Weapons De-Targeting Agreement (June 1998), which remains largely symbolic, China reportedly maintains its nuclear weapons capable of striking the US in a low alert position.

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[19] Joint Data Exchange Centre (2001) "The Joint Center for the Exchange of Data from Early Warning Systems and Notification of Missile Launches"
[20] Dunn, Lewis. "Coordinated Security Management - Towards a 'New Framework," Survival, vol 43, no3, 2001, p88
[21] Ibid, p87
[22] Ibid, p88
[23] Ibid, p88
[24] Mutual De-targeting (1994)
[25] Ferguson, Charles (March 2000), 'Sparking a Build-up" Arms Control Today, vol 30, no 2, p5
[26] Ibid
[27] Ibid

A more meaningful measure would be to take the US nuclear force off hair-trigger alert.[28] A de-alerted force that provides a mutually assured survivable deterrent and ensures that any re-alerting would be detected with sufficient advanced warning would give China adequate confidence that the US does not intend a first strike. Nevertheless, China should take steps to secure the survivability of its deterrent, because a de-alerted US force would not be sufficient to guarantee the viability of China's deterrent.[29] Furthermore, China and the US should enact predictability measures in order to achieve greater transparency between their militaries. For example, they could conduct annual data exchanges concerning baseline holdings and the process of redeployments, storage, and elimination of warheads. Such measures would build upon the resumption of high-level military-to-military contacts.[30]

3.b. Our suggestions for strategic arms reduction

The US should seek bilateral arms reductions with Russia to START II levels of 3000-3500 warheads and ideally pursue further reductions to 2000-2500 warheads (START III levels), possibly even to 1500 warheads.[31] If the US does pursue unilateral reductions, it is essential that President Bush also incorporate verification guidelines into them. This would imply strengthening international non-proliferation and risk-reduction efforts and increasing the prospects for regional arms control and disarmament efforts in strategically exposed parts of the world.[32] Another promising avenue for negotiations may be to redress some of the inequities that Russian leaders perceive in START II.[33] Specifically, START II should be amended to permit Russia to deploy road- or rail-based MIRVed ICBMs, which represent the strength of Russia's nuclear strategy, as opposed to only allowing for submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), the strongest element of the US strategic arsenal.[34]

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[28] Ibid
[29] Ibid
[30] Ibid
[31] Putin's proposal for START III negotiations; Russia will probably only be able to maintain 1500 warheads in the future (Young, S. "The Effect (of NMD) on Arms Control," Pushing the Limits, Council for a Liveable World website: http://www.clw.org/)
[32] Becher, Klaus. "Missile Defence and International Statecraft," Survival, vol 43, no 3, 2001, p75
[33] Wilkening, Dean. "Amending the ABM Treaty", Survival, vol 42, no 1, (Spring 2000), p39
[34] Ibid

4 . BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

4.a. Introduction

We, the Committee for Disarmament and Defense, believe that the complete and total disarmament of biological and chemical weapons is more possible than the total destruction of nuclear arms. From the success of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), we can see that the cohesive agreement of nation states collectively disarming is an attainable prospect. Our optimism is fuelled by the fact that there is inherently less diplomatic emphasis by larger states on chemical and biological weapons as a deterrent. Nations whose primary means of defense is based upon chemical and biological weapons would be much less able and willing to disarm for the sake of their defense strategies. This will ultimately hinder the completion of biological and chemical disarmament, but does pose questions on how defense should be subsidized and aided by others for the goal of disarmament.

4.b. The political and objective nature of chemical and biological weapons

The total disarmament of chemical and biological weapons has been curtailed for some time, as nations have set forth various issues. Nations without nuclear capabilities are refusing to disarm and are more likely to use chemical and biological weapons in conflict. Also, nations with significant nuclear capabilities and larger economies are interested in hoarding chemical and biological material for the pharmaceutical and biotech industries. These materials are of concern to disarmament activists, as they are easily converted for weaponry purposes. Such nations, however, have expressed their concern that their significant investment in research and development is in danger of being stolen, copied, or lost through organized inspection and disarmament. Another factor is the illicit trade in biological and chemical weapons to terrorist groups on the global black market. Biological material itself is extremely difficult to track and inspect, as it is easily concealed and maneuvered in comparison to chemical weapons, allowing sales to be unregistered or not completely accounted for.

4.c. Youth goals: total chemical and biological disarmament

Current measures towards disarmament

The OPCW has announced in its Synthesis 2000: The Year in Review, that it is willing to pursue the full disarmament of all chemical weapons. It has the backing of 143 nations to obliterate chemical threats on a global level by 2007. The continued success of the OPCW in pursuing the dissemination of the Chemical Weapons Convention will act as an imperative and key step in both the global elimination of chemical weapons and as a non-proliferation treaty. Another similar convention, incorporating 141 nations, has banned the use and storage of biological weapons within their own borders under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The youth strongly advocate these initiatives taken by the nations who have already joined the CWC and BWC. Their agreement with this policy will ensure the security and freedom of their people against chemical and biological threats in the future. This step is in coherence with our initial goal of complete disarmament and is made possible by the organization of cohesive agreements between nation states. It is this cohesiveness that allows and permits nations to disarm in a comfortable and secure manner, relieving the anxiety that arises from the destruction of national defense materials. The youth support this procedure of centralized disarmament agreements as a foundation and precedent for future arms treaties. As outlined in Section I: Nuclear Weapons, such strategic success can be used as an example for future disarmament negotiations in the area of Nuclear Weapons.

The youth strongly recommend that the BWC construct a verification committee similar to the OPCW in order to monitor and regulate the availability and storage of biological arms. Such a committee would need to outline what kind of facilities would be up for inspection, timings of scheduled visits, limitations on random visits, and the degree of control over exports. The United States and other developed countries also need to comply with such regulations as fears grow over chemical and biological arms coming under terrorist control. The United States Senate itself needs to abandon its proposals for relaxing verification controls. Such provisions would include allowing for all accounted facilities to be open to inspections and allowing samples to be exported for laboratory analysis abroad. Also, the OPCW must set out a fixed schedule for arms destruction to ensure completion by the assigned date. The Committee for Disarmament and Defense is in full support of the measures taken by these non-governmental organizations in gaining the confidence of numerous nations to disarm. The Youth urge such organizations to be more forceful in making nations commit themselves to agreements in disarmament treaties.

Youth suggestions for solutions towards complete disarmament

The complete disarmament of chemical and biological weapons is problematic, as these weapons are utilized by nations without nuclear capabilities. Chemical and biological weapons are seen as 'poor man's nukes'. Thus, these nations will be less eager to disarm their chemical and biological weapons than the nuclear powers. The confidence of these nations must be increased in order to achieve complete cooperation in the destruction of all chemical and biological weapons. The disarmament of these weapons compromises national security, so there must be a way to give these nations the confidence to disarm. The youth propose multilateral support for these nations through the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. If the global community is truly behind the ideals of the OPCW and CWC, then we implore the provision of multilateral support to these troubled nations. Nations have the right to defend themselves, and some are using chemical and biological weapons as their means of defense. They must be subsidized and given support so that they can establish another form of defense. The creation of a temporary support program by a multilateral support group would give the disarming nations confidence and a means of defense. Multilateral support would assist disarming nations by providing scientific expertise from the OPCW and peacekeeping forces from the United Nations. The disarmament of chemical and biological weapons should happen in timed phases, similar to the START programs. If these confidence-building measures are implemented, we, the youth, are assured that nations will be more open to disarm and destroy these horrendous weapons of mass destruction.

5. CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS: GROUND WARFARE

The complete elimination of conventional warfare between nations, guns in society, and fields of landmines is the model of a peaceful and safe world of which we all dream. Although this dream is noble, we realize that it is, like many of our visions, not realistic at this time. In light of this fact, we propose the solutions to two concrete problems, gun control and landmines, and go on to discuss the right of a nation to defense and the responsibility that this right entails.

5.a.

The youth believe that gun control and the availability of conventional weapons are serious and fundamental issues when discussing disarmament. Although we realize that this is a national issue, and that countries should be able to decide to what degree arms should be accessible to their people given cultural and political situations, it is a fact that it is through

the lax policies and easy access to small arms in certain countries that international terrorist organizations accumulate weapons arsenals. We believe, therefore, that a global standard guiding governments on their responsibility to the international community on this matter would lead to a common standard of gun regulation. We strongly recommend that nations develop and apply systems of gun licensing, including clauses for background checks and annual registration, and that member states will have a precedent to refer to, set by the United Nations. International cooperation in the endeavor for gun control is the only way to prevent international networks of gun trafficking and to create safe, gun free communities on a domestic level.

Landmines have devastating effects on human life and the freedom of citizens of a nation, both within its borders and traversing them. We recognize that it is essential that these landmines be disarmed if civilians are to be saved and agriculture and local industry are to restart after years of being prevented by these landmines. We strongly urge the UN to make funds available to help the Less Developed Countries (LDC) disarm landmines within the country (for example in rice paddies in the case of Cambodia). We also call upon nations possessing advanced de-mining technology to share this information with the LDCs and to participate actively in its implementation. The value of industry, agriculture and property that would be made available if landmines were to be disarmed is large considering the statistics issued by the UN. Therefore, we urge all nations to cooperate in disarming landmines. Landmines on the borders of nations are in some cases a major deterrent of war and play an important defensive role. We are aware that they are vital in preserving the balance of power and the stability of borders, as well as inhibiting illegal smuggling. We understand that, given current political situations, the disarming of such landmines is not possible in the foreseeable future. It is possible, however, to make total disarmament of landmines a goal for the years to come, by instigating a program of confidence-building measures between bordering nations now.

5.b.

Unlike in the sections above dealing with Weapons of Mass Destruction, the goal of which was the eventual complete elimination of WMD from national and non national arsenals, in this section we recognize the right of a country to maintain a standing army. This is necessary in order for a nation to secure and defend its territory and sovereignty, and to reassure its citizens that they are protected. This sense of protection will facilitate and raise

the effectiveness of confidence building measures between nations. We believe that, while nations have the right to protect their national sovereignty, they also have a responsibility to the international community not to pose any offensive threat to a neighboring or non-neighboring nation. This international responsibility extends to the commitment not to harbor and support any non-governmental group whose aim is to cause harm to another nation or another group of people - a commitment that is founded on the basic concepts of respect and trust between nations. It is imperative that nations be aware of this responsibility in order to create a world based on mutual trust and, ultimately, on increased stability and peace.

6. CONCLUSION

We believe that only through the measures outlined in the above sections, the implementation of which is pursued in line with the vision of eventual total disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, will our goal of a peaceful and secure world be achieved. While this may seem difficult, especially in the current political context, incidents such as those of September 11th 2002 should encourage nations to work together to counter international threats posed by terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. International cooperation and trust, rather than unilateral actions, should characterize the response to multinational threats. The global acknowledgement of this vision, as the model for the most secure and comfortable world, is an ideological feat that can be reached only through international relationships based on trust and a common hope for humankind.

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ACTION PAPER

A follow up to the THIMUN delegation's participation in the *World Conference Against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*, held from 31 August to 7 September 2001 in Durban, South Africa.

"Tolerance is not a luxury; it should be our way of life."
Mary Robinson, High Commissioner for Human Rights

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Conference against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance (WCAR) set out to find ways of eradicating all forms of discrimination and cultural intolerance throughout the world. Many people wonder if it is even possible that the whole world will one day be free of all forms of discrimination and racism. We, the youth, believe that this vision will one day become a reality. We realise that changes will not be made overnight, but we strongly believe that through the promotion of cultural diversity and tolerance worldwide, this vision can be achieved. Tolerance means understanding, accepting, and acknowledging the differences between peoples and cultures. By focusing on the main issues of the WCAR, we feel that we have come up with feasible visions and solutions that will enable every part of the world to become more tolerant towards all human beings. The issues that we are focusing on are exclusion, religion, minorities, indigenous peoples, gender, HIV/AIDS, media, and most importantly, education.

2. EXCLUSION

Exclusion is a social problem. It is the conscious act of leaving out an individual or a social group. The excluded are not given a chance to be active in today's society. Exclusion is the result of ignorance, fear, and a feeling of superiority. It is human nature to be afraid of difference and the unknown. Society lacks information and fails to recognise the need for it. A vicious circle is created; the excluded have no chance of being integrated into society, since they are not given a chance to be educated. It is inevitable that, consequently, the excluded will suffer more. The excluded are forced to fight for their existence, often resulting in crime and delinquency.

Exclusion is a part of everyday life. It can be found everywhere. Exclusion occurs not only because of physical differences, but also due to varying cultural and historical backgrounds. There are certain target groups that suffer from exclusion:

- Drug addicts
- HIV/AIDS infected
- Street children
- Ethnic minorities
- Religious groups
- Criminals
- Homosexuals
- Mentally and physically handicapped
- Economically less fortunate
- Others

All exclusion is due to the same aforementioned reasons. In the past, exclusion was not recognised as a social problem and was widely accepted or tolerated. In today's world, documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and organisations such as UNAIDS and UNICEF, promote tolerance and cultural diversity through education and information on an international level. Nevertheless, exclusion remains a widespread universal problem. Although different approaches need to be taken to solve the problem, education is the key in every case.

The solution lies in education. Many excluded, especially the economically less fortunate, lack education about their rights in society and job training to ensure social integration. It is just as important to promote education in schools. Society must learn to be tolerant of, and respectful towards, difference. Schools, therefore, need appropriate materials, well-educated teachers and experts who have experienced exclusion or can relate to the impact exclusion can have on human lives (e.g. creating a vicious circle). This education, taught in schools, should cohere with what is taught at home. It is therefore essential that education also occurs on the part of those who exclude - especially the media, who influence society's comportment and mentality. Part of this education is learning about historical factors and causes. These can be applied to understand the development of exclusion and thereby to prevent future occurrences. While education can take place on a large scale, the actual process of developing tolerance towards others begins in the individual's mind. Exclusion can be eliminated once the individual recognises the importance of tolerance and cultural diversity for the existence of society.

3. RELIGION

Religion, spirituality, and belief play a central role in the lives of millions of men, women and children, affecting the way they live and treat other people. Religious intolerance has been a product of strong beliefs throughout history. Misconceptions and misguidance by religious leaders foster intolerance between religions, as people are told that the only way to fully live in their deity's glory is to show no love for those who do not. Lack of knowledge about other religions also harbours fear, which leads to a lack of respect. People are all too eager to regard something as wrong when they are afraid and often try to change it, infringing on another person's right to freedom of religion, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In an ever-connecting world, people are exposed to diverse religions and, without the proper knowledge, fear, intolerance and persecution are created. The idea of a 'monoculture', brought about by too much interaction with other people, breeds intolerance as people try to maintain their unique identity. We believe that an increased knowledge of diverse religions, whilst retaining personal religious identity, is the path to increased tolerance.

It is our task as the people of the world to decrease the fear of loss of identity and fear of the unknown and thereby create a world where people of different religions can socialise, whilst retaining their unique cultural and religious identity, and treat each other with respect and tolerance.

Religious intolerance has many forms. It is important to recognise all of these, as it is only when problems are identified that they can be solved. We believe religious intolerance to be the cause of discrimination, harming (including physical, mental, economic and vicarious), or stereotyping of people due to their religious beliefs, disbeliefs and lifestyles.

The youth of today are the adults of tomorrow. If we can eliminate intolerance in youth while they are young, then, once they become adults, our mission will be completed. Part of the solution to religious intolerance is the education and integration of youth across the globe. We believe that conferences and regional meetings for youth, such as the THIMUN Youth Assembly, are crucial in the breaking of down intolerance barriers. The continued communication between young people to increase their understanding of different religions will make them less likely to be intolerant towards each other. We encourage the creation of a worldwide youth network dedicated to the elimination of intolerance. Such a network, including the newly created THIMUN Youth Network, should work with the United Nations and

governments to establish youth movements and organisations locally. We request the supplementation of all youth movements and organisations with tolerance as an aim and the formulation of an annual action paper, to be submitted to governments as the voice of youth on tolerance. We realise that parents have a large effect on what many youth believe and request that they learn more about different religions in order to continue the message of tolerance in the home. We believe that the inclusion in national educational curricula of a subject that informs students about all the religions of the world, past and present, as well as teaching tolerance and respect of these, will ensure that all students have access to increased knowledge and understanding, thus continuing the message of tolerance in the classroom. We also recognise that many youth find education on tolerance boring and therefore may be unlikely to take an active role. We believe that the inclusion of tolerance education in popular youth events (including sports events, music concerts and cinema) is an effective way of raising the level of understanding and tolerance amongst youth. The inclusion of the message of tolerance in situations in which youth already socialise can lead to increased understanding, knowledge, and friendship and therefore respect and tolerance.

Religious leaders are the physical focus of many religions today. Many people see them as the closest person to their god and many believe that they alone can hear their god's wishes. This 'divine power' creates an unparalleled influence over their people. We recognise that religious leaders play a key role in promoting tolerance. We recognise that the power of religious leaders can be used to promote sentiments of peace and tolerance, as opposed to feelings of exclusion and hatred. We also recognise that, in the past, many religious leaders, by never having any contact with people of other religions, indirectly sent a message of intolerance to their followers and therefore we applaud the meeting of religious leaders in 2002 and recommend that religious leaders hold annual meetings with the aim of promoting greater understanding, tolerance and respect among all people globally and regionally. We further request that regional religious leaders and regional religious groups hold regular meetings and social gatherings to increase knowledge and understanding within communities.

We recognise that, in an interconnecting world, people are becoming more exposed to many different religions and that, with this interconnecting world, comes increased access to knowledge and greater understanding.

Currently there are few organisations created purely to promote tolerance and respect with regard to religious differences. We recommend that a tolerance organisation be set up, affiliated to the United Nations and specifically linked with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with divisions in every country to monitor and actively pursue the elimination of intolerance. Its main aim should be to promote religious respect and tolerance, recognising that not every person will like or agree with some religions. However, we believe that, with support, all people can respect and tolerate another's beliefs, regardless of how different it is from their own. We ask that all governments provide people with access to information about different religions and tolerance. We suggest that religious tolerance programs are integrated into all training programs, including employment and tertiary training. As people are increasing their self-worth, and thus their quality of life, whilst learning about tolerance and respect, more people will be willing to participate in the promotion of tolerance.

We realise that the elimination of religious intolerance is a long-term goal. It is not an easy or a small task to educate and create greater understanding amongst the diverse people of the world. In the last sixty years, religious intolerance has significantly decreased in many parts of the world and it is our hope and our mission that the total eradication of religious intolerance will take place in the future.

The essence of all religions is peace and prosperity, a goal that can only truly be reached when the diverse people of the world fully tolerate, respect and understand each other's amazing differences.

4. MINORITIES

Social minorities include homo- and bisexuals, handicapped people, economic minorities, and AIDS victims. Governments should provide facilities that will enable social minorities to partake in the lifestyle provided for the people living in their country. Education of the general public is crucial to prevent prejudice derived from ignorance, fear, and lack of tolerance. In addition, if the individual is in need of special care, governments should support them financially and legally, as far as possible.

To abolish discrimination against ethnic/religious minorities, governments should promote tolerance through education, media, and community-based events for youth and adults, creating awareness of various cultures and religions, and promoting their acceptance. Establishment of an

NGO is recommended to scan the media, preventing the promotion of biased information in the form of selective omission of information, implicit language, or any other means. Moreover, each nation should enforce laws to abolish discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities in the workplace in terms of employment, promotion, monetary rewards and other benefits. Freedom to practice religion and tradition should be guaranteed when it does not interfere with the duties and welfare of society members.

5. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Several issues should be addressed in order to abolish discrimination against indigenous people. The first issue is the failure of states to acknowledge indigenous rights to the lands and resources of the country in the form of occupancy, use, and ownership. In addition, expropriation of lands for national and corporate interests results in unjust removal and dislocation of people. Indigenous people are not always given rights as citizens in their country. This creates serious complications regarding issues such as education, employment, and healthcare. When adjusting to the dominant society, indigenous people are apt to lose their traditions, cultures, and consequently, lose their identity as indigenous people. Moreover, indigenous people are often denied full or effective participation in decision-making processes. Most of all, the dominant sectors of a country fail to recognise the existence of indigenous people and acknowledge their traditions, cultures, and rights as human beings.

Indigenous people living in a certain country should automatically have the right to obtain the citizenship of that country if they wish to do so. If their social or governmental philosophy does not support such an act, the non-indigenous government of the country should allow the indigenous people to survive in the country as a separate entity.

Indigenous people should be allowed to reap the benefits provided by the government to their citizens, such as education, healthcare and employment, in exchange for the acceptance of the duties given to citizens or the duties agreed upon between the government and the indigenous people. If they choose to remain a separate entity, indigenous people should respect the laws and lifestyles of the government of that country, while the non-indigenous people of the country should also respect the indigenous culture and its laws. The two societies should acknowledge each other's existence and develop an understanding of their differences. Social programs may be devised to aid the acceptance of the various lifestyles and cultures present within the same country.

Indigenous people should be granted the freedom to have their own representative within the national government. They have the right to take part in decisions that directly or indirectly have an impact on their society.

Conflicts concerning territory issues are discussed in turn below:

- Indigenous people should be given enough land to enable the survival of their indigenous lifestyle, taking into consideration the ability of the non-indigenous government to deal with this issue. Agreements should be made as part of a compromise.
- If sacred places do not contain part of the country's natural resources, they are to be protected. In lands where a spiritual value is attached by the indigenous people and where significant natural resources are present, a certain percentage of the natural resources should be given up by the government in order to respect these lands as a sacred place.
- The national government of the country in which the indigenous people live (or in case of a non-government entity; an elected government body) is only allowed to move the indigenous society to another location within the country with the consent of the indigenous people.

6. GENDER

Another important aspect of discrimination that should be tackled is discrimination involving gender, especially against women. There have been a number of solutions proposed and ratified by the international community. However, as youth, we feel that much more can be done in a culturally sensitive manner. We have to comprehend that, although we are living in one world, we have two very different societies. Therefore, in addressing this issue, solutions should be adapted appropriately to both traditional and non-traditional societies.

Perhaps the biggest problem in traditionally dominated societies is that women do not have equal social rights. This is due to the fact that many of these societies have a close link to their religious and traditional beliefs. Often the problem can be attributed to the exclusion factor, specifically lack of exposure to the 'outer world'. Some examples of discrimination against women in these societies are: being denied the right to vote, workforce opportunities, proper healthcare, education, and schooling. However, in societies that are not dominated by tradition, the problem is often related to the denial of equal professional rights, such as acceptance in jobs

and higher positions, wage differences, and fringe benefits including reasonable necessities in addressing, for instance, pregnancy. Statistics show that the global literacy rate for women is a mere 71.4%, as opposed to 83.7% for men. Moreover, two-thirds of illiterate adults are women.

As mentioned above, there have been solutions in the past, some of which have been ratified, but some of which we believe are unjust. The non-traditionally dominated societies have been used as a standard to represent what equal rights are. The outcomes have not all been progressive or fair to traditionally dominated societies. Often the reason for sexual discrimination in traditionally dominated societies is age-old belief. We must bear in mind that it is both unjust and unfeasible to change thousands of years of tradition. In non-traditionally dominated societies, guidelines have been created that are encouraging companies to employ more females, but quite often they are employed, not because of their qualifications, but to fill the quota of the guidelines. This leads to a form of counter-discrimination where a more qualified male might not be hired. Another aspect of sexual discrimination that has been tackled in the past is the issue of refugee women. The United Nations has made great efforts to combat discrimination against refugee women, and organisations like the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) have tried to eliminate discrimination against women in general. We believe that the organisations could be more efficient if more countries and organisations supported them.

Although attempts have been made to solve the problem of gender discrimination, they could be developed further and new ones added. Instead of imposing western or other ideas on a country or society, we should make those societies aware of other ideas and beliefs. Even if a religion or tradition discriminates against women, these women still have the right to choose their religion or whether or not they want to follow the tradition. In many cases, these women are not given the right or possibility to know about other religions or beliefs, and therefore they 'do not know any better'. Governments should be urged to encourage open-mindedness and to promote education about other beliefs and traditions, which could best be achieved using the media. One very important thing to consider is that people can only be helped if they want to be helped, and so giving someone the choice by informing them of other possibilities, could change their opinion.

Gender discrimination can also be solved through equal educational opportunities for both women and men, which consequently will make women just as eligible for all jobs or political positions as men. There are already regulations and recommendations in many countries regarding what percentage of a company's employees must be female. However, this often leads

to counter-discrimination, as explained above. Therefore, these regulations must be more specific and equally balanced.

Combating sexual discrimination cannot be achieved overnight. It is very important to realise that healing the world of its problems and making it a better place takes time. Traditions are age-old and sacred. It is not easy to change people's mentality to conform to worldwide acceptance. We must therefore be very careful and let time take its course. Changing the youth of today is possible, but it is very hard.

7. HIV/AIDS

Today AIDS affects a variety of people from diverse cultures, social classes, religions, age groups and genders. In the last decade, we have learned that it can be contracted through blood transfusions, from mother to infant, and by sharing needles, as opposed to the former belief that sexual intercourse was the only way. Today 4 million people have this disease and 95% of these infected persons live in developing nations. Each day 5,500 people die from the consequences of AIDS in Africa. This crisis in Africa is unsolvable due to poverty. One of the reasons most Africans cannot get adequate treatment or medical care is that most essential medicines are much too expensive for the poor. Another reason is that African leaders are denying the magnitude of AIDS, stating that it is not an urgent problem facing our world today and it is therefore not prioritised. HIV/AIDS can no longer be thought of as just a health problem, but it is also attributable to social, economic, and development problems. Although HIV/AIDS is easily prevented, we are deeply concerned about the growing complacency of developed nations regarding this issue.

To target youth, we must use methods that appeal to them. As youth, we tend not to listen to someone who is not famous or someone who does not interest us. We are attracted to people who are known worldwide and eloquent. This is why many artists and entertainers are founding organisations to create worldwide awareness of AIDS. This is appealing to youth. In 2001, 'What's going on?' by various pop stars hit stores and sold out quickly. The song targets teenagers and addresses a major issue, AIDS, by using a technique appealing to youth: music. Unfortunately, this appeals only to those who listen to English music and understand it. To address the issue of this virus, UNICEF, UNPFA, UNDCP, UNDP, UNESCO, WHO, and the World Bank created the joint program UNAIDS. Together with the United Nations Secretary General, UNAIDS has been working towards an international stance addressing this issue.

However, it has not reached its full potential. Efforts have also been made by existing health groups, but without global cooperation and open communication, their development has not progressed.

Culturally specific methods to solve the problem do not work on an international level. Yet, this is a global issue not a local one. We propose that each government create a plan of action, according to local customs and traditions, to address the issue of AIDS locally. We should also make use of the increasing number of multilingual youth in our world today, who could connect with youth from different parts of the world on an individual level, in order to come up with useful ways to show awareness to their people. Nationally, youth should play a pivotal role in creating a HIV/AIDS campaign focusing primarily on youth. By doing this, they are learning ways to educate people on the consequences of AIDS and prevention methods.

Education is the most important element in increasing AIDS awareness around the world. As youth, we need to increase education on AIDS in different ways and on different levels. We should take into account that we live in a globalised world, where there are many different cultures with diverse values and traditions. First, we have to encourage the establishment of local organisations to educate people about AIDS. This might cause disruption in some cultures, because in religions such as Islam, where pre-marital sex is forbidden, the existence of AIDS is seldom recognised. However, it is important that we try to break down barriers and reach out to people in these areas and this can be done by working with cultural, religious, and tribal leaders. We need to work with the different cultures and not impose our values on them. This is where the media has to intervene. The media is one of the most powerful forces that control our world today. It can be used to our advantage in promoting AIDS awareness to everyone, whether it be through TV, radio, movies or printed material. Each nation's media organisations should adapt the methods in which they educate people on AIDS, in order to make it as suitable as possible for their culture. As music is very appealing to teenagers, it would be beneficial if famous singers continue to address the issue of AIDS in their songs. This will lead to greater awareness. Educating people about AIDS is not only the role of the media, but also the role of our schools. Schools should address AIDS as an important issue affecting our world today. National educational curricula should be reformed to make HIV/AIDS education compulsory for students from the age of twelve, so that youth know about the effects of AIDS, how it is contracted, and how it can be stopped. Furthermore, at university level, professors should discuss AIDS and tie it in with their subjects where possible, in order to create awareness.

However, it is important to note that there is an enormous difference between the views on AIDS in some parts of the world compared to others. In the certain societies, AIDS is openly discussed and addressed. People are more conscious about this disease because pre-marital sex is not a taboo. In addition, you can actually see people affected by AIDS and hear them recount their stories. This is not the case in all societies. In other societies, AIDS is seldom discussed, even though it is a well-known fact that it exists. There are many reasons why people in these societies are not educated about this disease. This is because the concept itself is not accepted and educators do not feel comfortable discussing it. When discussing AIDS with someone, several issues have to be taken into account: their traditions, beliefs, value systems, family behaviour norms, community, gender, and person-to-person relationships. It is understandable that AIDS is a sensitive issue to some people. However, it is necessary to break the barrier of narrow mindedness and educate these people about AIDS. It would be beneficial if local organisations would start opening up their doors to those who need an AIDS education. This will result in people being willing to comprehend the issue of AIDS. In order to start making people aware of this ongoing problem, we, as youth, should urge communities to develop an education scheme to reach out to people who are uneducated and teach them about the consequences of AIDS and prevention methods. We should urge governments to build local health centres to teach uneducated people about this virus and to teach them the basic prevention methods.

As for those who have contracted the disease, it is important that they be treated with the respect every human being deserves. People around the world view AIDS patients as lepers. AIDS patients are alienated. Many countries try to hide the fact that AIDS is a problem in their country. In some countries, people who have contracted the disease are shut away from society in special hospitals. They are locked up and are never heard of again. They are not given any treatment for their disease and are treated as prisoners, kept in huge wards together and never let out again. This is appalling because it is taking away their right to live. This is a violation of their rights as human beings. Hence, we should learn to accept them as normal people. Nevertheless, this set-up is the most convenient for governments, as they can deny that they have any cases of AIDS in their country. Everyone needs to accept the link between HIV and AIDS, but acceptance should not stop there. There needs to be acceptance of those who have contracted this disease and acceptance for the lifestyles that these people lead. This will only happen over time.

As youth, we have to become leaders in order to stop these problems and let education play a role in teaching people all over the world about the issue of AIDS. The only way in which we can truly combat this disease is by fully understanding it. By combining our efforts and learning from one another, we will achieve this goal. We can only do this hand in hand. We have to open the doors to reach out to the world.

8. MEDIA

The media has both a powerful influence on people's attitudes and perceptions and a weighty responsibility to contribute to social integration. Currently, a great deal of media attention is given to the seemingly insurmountable difficulties that divide peoples and nations and little attention is given to evidence that these differences can be overcome. A serious global discourse must be undertaken to explore the use of existing, and rapidly emerging, media technologies to foster hope and promote social integration and development. The media has a responsibility to help people understand that diversity, often a source of conflict, can also be a powerful source of social development.

The term 'media' can be used in reference to many elements of mass communication. For the purposes of this Action Paper, the term will be used to describe news items appearing in newspapers, on television, radio, etc., as well as some entertainment programming. The issue of the media should be separated into three primary issues, namely content, ownership and the Internet.

8.a. Content:

When dealing with the media, a balance needs to be found between regulation and freedom of speech. The Committee suggests that the UN establish a subsidiary mandate, possibly under UNESCO, to research methods by which content could be regulated. While respecting the importance of freedom of speech, the Committee believes that it is reasonable to regulate against blatantly racist material. An important beginning would be to eliminate stereotyping based on religion, culture, gender, race, class, nationality and ethnicity from media programming. Furthermore, the mandate should use the media to focus on constructive, unifying and cooperative undertakings to demonstrate humanity's capacity to work together to meet the enormous challenges facing it.

8.b. Ownership

The imperative goal of the media throughout the world should be the provision of diverse information. This creates the ideal situation, whereby people can make their own informed decisions based on diverse opinion provided. In order to provide this diverse information, governments need to encourage:

- the existence of numerous, independent media outlets,
- diversity of ownership of these outlets,
- all media outlets to report factual information accurately and present diverse opinion in a distinguished manner.

8.c. Internet

The Committee recognises the development of the new phenomenon, namely the Internet, and its power to influence people's opinion. The Committee also recognises its great complexity and believes that a UN body, such as the one mentioned under 'Content', would be in an ideal position to investigate the possible regulation of racist and/or intolerant Internet sites.

The media has significant influence on the beliefs of youth as well as adults. This power gives the media a greater responsibility to provide accurate information and diversity of opinion. It is through diversity of opinion that a mutual respect of all societies is promoted.

9. EDUCATION

A common theme throughout this entire paper has been how to solve worldwide problems concerning racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, using education. Most forms of discrimination are often caused by a lack of knowledge or understanding of other people's principles or beliefs. These misconceptions often result in fear and tension among the diverse social groups in today's multicultural society. Consequently, it is evident that education could be the key to combating these prejudices globally, by solving the problem at its root. It should be underlined that a good education is a duty and not a luxury. Since it is widely accepted that education is the key to success, it is necessary to ensure every individual's right to education as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

It is true that education can be a double-edged sword, since it can both promote and prevent the spread of prejudiced notions and ideas targeted towards specific groups of people. Because youth are susceptible to blindly accepting both biased and unbiased principles, the main concern of governments should be finding ways to ensure that each individual enjoys an unbiased education that stimulates and promotes tolerance, awareness, and understanding of people from different cultures, religions, backgrounds or lifestyles. This increases the individual's self-worth and can eventually create a society in which diversity is cherished and tolerated.

Although there are numerous ways to educate youth, primary and secondary education probably play the most important part in combating any kind of prejudice. Every nation should ensure that their people benefit from the basic human right to education, regardless of their race, origin or creed. Any discrimination regarding appropriate access to educational resources based on gender or health conditions, such as disabilities or HIV/AIDS, should be eliminated by governments through any legal measures. This is necessary, as it is only possible to effectively fight racism through education if the whole community enjoys equal rights.

School societies should act as role models for youth by teaching them the basic principles of equality and tolerance towards people with different beliefs, ideas or morals. Educational associations, including sports and cultural groups, should fulfil a similar role in teaching youth how to respect diversity. In order to reach a better understanding of diversity, schools should establish, or encourage the establishment of, youth discussion groups. These should be within the schools themselves, or among different schools, both locally or, if the funds are available, globally. When youth from different parts of the world and different backgrounds meet, such as at the THIMUN Youth Assembly, to discuss or teach another about their worldview, a general awareness and acceptance of other cultures, religions, and lifestyles will result.

Furthermore, schools or governments should strive to ensure that subjects such as history are presented to youth not only from an accurate perspective, but also from various historical perspectives. This will give children the ability to gain a deeper understanding of the roots of other cultures, religions, or groups in general.

Although the term education is usually associated with educating youth, educating adults and raising a general awareness among this group is also crucial to combating discrimination. Since both children and adults can be exposed to discrimination or express their discriminatory ideas

and actions, it is necessary to fight both the discrimination at its root by educating the children, as well as educating adults through the media. In order to reach everyone, tolerance-promoting programs should be integrated with employment training in all fields of work. Since not all people have access to media, volunteer programs should be encouraged to organise meetings that bring together both adults and youth to learn about diversity and the importance of tolerance. This goal can only be reached with the involvement of governments and the United Nations. Education of adults can raise a general awareness of the problem and show them that there are ways to tolerate diversity. Like schoolteachers, parents and guardians play an important part in shaping the ideals and views of younger children - their understanding of diversity is crucial to the child's understanding of the issue. Parents' or guardians' understanding, or sometimes lack of understanding, is directly projected onto the child and shapes the way the child will see the world. It is, therefore, crucial that adults provide a stable and supportive environment for today's youth, so that they will grow up with moral values, understanding, and tolerance towards other cultures, religions, and lifestyles.

The role of education as a means to promote tolerance and understanding towards diversity is significant. If this is ensured, we will slowly be able to decrease racism. The effort should be an international effort since, in essence, the problem affects everybody's integrity. Although the fight against racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, will be a long and tedious struggle, unbiased education may well be a major part of the solution to eradicate these problems.

10. CONCLUSION

The Committee believes that in today's world of social and cultural unrest and intolerance, there exists an exigent need for civilisation to acknowledge and address this rapidly evolving problem. As Kofi Annan stated *"we can love what we are without hating who or what we are not"*. We, the Youth Assembly, believe that the primary cause of intolerance stems from ignorance. To alleviate this problem we feel the most fundamental solution is education, for both the young and the old. We, the people of the world, need to create a mutual respect for people of different backgrounds and learn to express humanity's compassion for one another.

"Most people agree, racists are not born, they develop,
and the primary cause of racism is ignorance"
Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

NATIONALITY AND COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE SURVEY
THIMUN YOUTH ASSEMBLY 2002

In the second Annual Session of the THIMUN Youth Assembly a total of 81 young people took part. The participants came from 22 countries and have 31 different nationalities. The participants divide into 35 men and 46 women. Their national representations were as follows:

THIMUN Youth Assembly 2002 Nationality Survey	
Armenia	1
Australia	9
Brazil	2
Bulgaria	1
Canada	1
Cape Verde	2
Colombia	2
Egypt	1
Finland	1
France	1
Germany	5
Ghana	2
Greece	2
India	1
Ireland	2
Japan	1
Korea	1
Kuwait	1
Lebanon	1
Luxembourg	1
Mexico	1
Netherlands	6
Pakistan	1
Qatar	1
Russia	3
South Africa	5
Spain	1
Switzerland	1
Turkey	6
United Kingdom	3
United States	16
Different Nationalities:	**31**

THIMUN Youth Assembly 2002 Country of Residence Survey	
Armenia	1
Australia	8
Belgium	1
Brazil	1
Cape Verde	2
China	3
Egypt	3
Finland	2
France	2
Germany	7
Ghana	2
Greece	1
Kenya	1
Korea	1
Kuwait	3
Netherlands	11
Netherlands Antilles	2
Russia	2
South Africa	5
Turkey	6
United Kingdom	7
United States	10
Different Countries:	**22**

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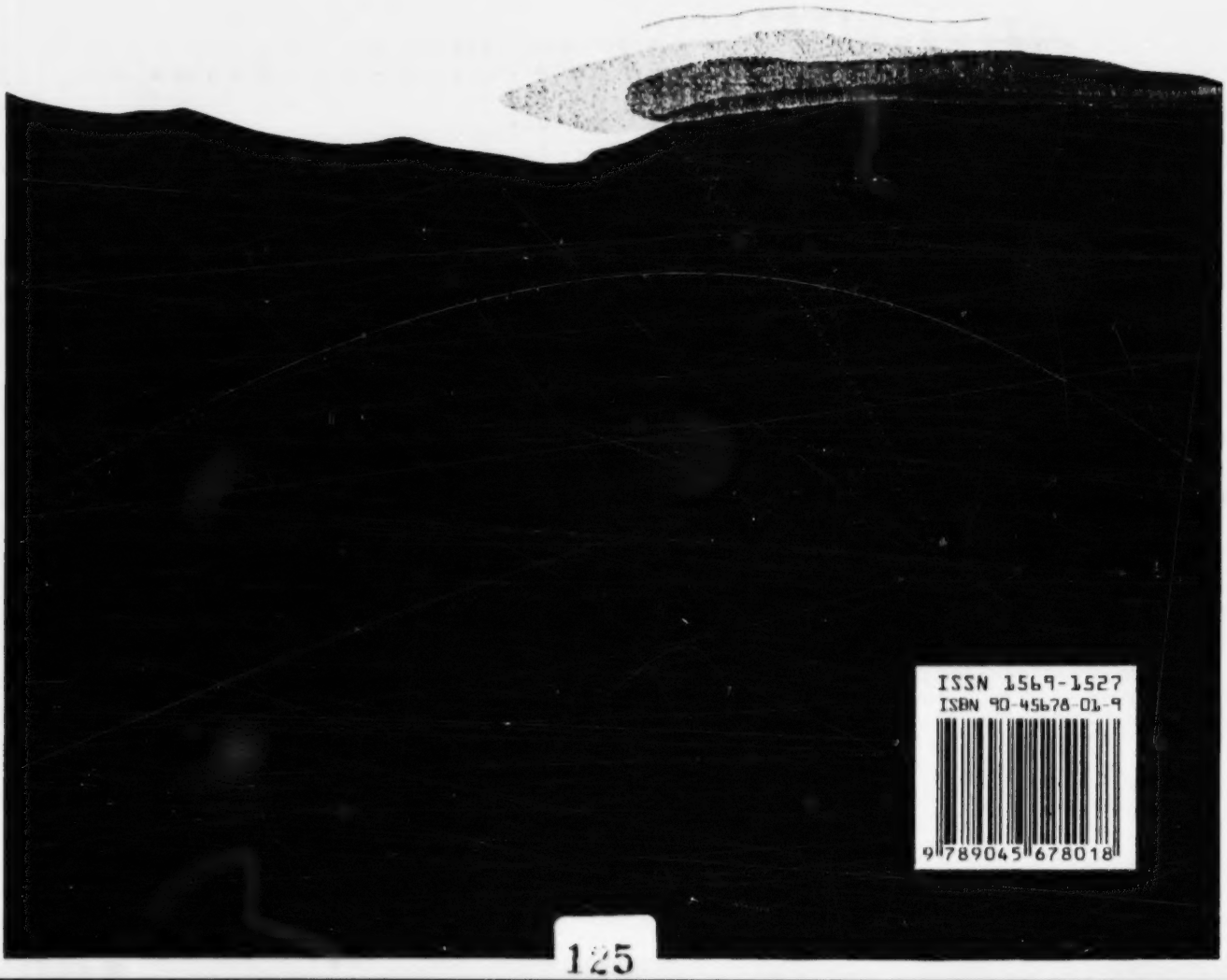

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